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A R T
I N T H E
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P. KUZNETSOV : Cotton Picking.

A R T

'ARCHITECTURE • SCULPTURE • PAINTING

I N T H E

GRAPHIC ARTS • THEATRE • FILM • CRAFTS

U.S.S.R

EDITED BY C. G. HOLME

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Reg. U.S. Pat. Off.

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LENIN — in 1919 : “ All the culture left by capitalism must be taken and socialism built with it. All science, technology, all knowledge and art must be taken. Without this we shall not be able to build the life of a communist society.”

—in October, 1920 : “ Without a clear understanding that only by an exact knowledge of the culture created by the entire evolution of man, that only by an analysis of it can a proletarian culture be created—without such an understanding we shall never solve this problem. Proletarian culture is not something that springs from nowhere, is not an invention of people who call themselves specialists in proletarian culture. This is complete nonsense. Proletarian culture must be a logical development of those funds of knowledge which humanity has worked out under the yokes of capitalist society.”

—in conversation with Clara Zetkin : “ In a society based on private property the artist works to produce ware for the market, he need purchasers. Our revolution has freed the artists from the yoke of these very prosaic conditions. It turned the Soviet Government into their defender and placer of orders. Every artist, everyone that considers himself an artist, has a right to create freely according to his ideals, independent of anything.

“ Only, of course,” Lenin added immediately, “ we communists, we cannot stand with hands folded and let chaos develop in any direction it may. We must guide this process according to a plan and form its results.”

MARX : “ All emancipation leads back to the human world, to relationships, to men themselves.”

INTRODUCTION

In the present collection of articles which we submit to the circle of readers of *The Studio*, representation will be found of a vast domain of the culture of the Soviet Union.

The life of the Soviet theatre and cinema, the branches of art in which Space is combined with Time are represented here along with the pictorial arts—painting, graphics, sculpture, posters, and art handicraft industries.

We believe that before the reader proceeds to peruse the articles and examine the illustrations, he will have taken due note of the fact that the art of the country that is building socialism is developing on special lines.

Our conception of art is based upon the principles of Marxist-Leninist philosophy. The Marx-Lenin-Stalin doctrine defines with adequate clearness the role of art in human society. Art, as one of the “ideological superstructures” towering above the foundations of a given system of social relationships, plays the role of a specific weapon for gaining knowledge of reality. Art is not an instrument of impassive contemplation or passive reflection. By the sheer logic of social evolution that is impelled by the struggle of classes, it either tends towards a revolutionary change of the existing social order, or serves the interests of its maintenance and consolidation. There is no “art for art’s sake.” Art, at all stages of human history, has performed social functions, and, consequently, cannot be considered as something aloof from politics, from the material interests and ideology of the social classes.

The process of development of Soviet art is the process of consolidation of all the creative forces of the country on the basis of socialist ideology.

Of course, the coming over of the basic mass of Soviet artists to the viewpoint of the proletariat was a complex and lengthy process which grew ever deeper with the successful development of our socialist construction. This became particularly evident during the latest period of Soviet history, when the socialist system had already clearly demonstrated its vitality, during the period of fulfilment of the great Five-Year Plans.

We can now speak of the organic union of the Soviet artist with the life of the country, with the interests and aspirations of the masses of the people, as of an indisputable fact.

Intimately bound up with the whole of Soviet reality, the art of the Soviet Union has gradually developed its own style, adequate to the epoch of socialist construction.

The numerous abstract formalistic currents (futurism, cubism,

constructivism, etc.) which had made their appearance during the pre-war and war periods very soon ceased to exist.

Instead of those currents, which in their numerous theoretical manifestos and by their whole practice had urged the necessity of breaking with the art of past centuries, there came other currents which took a different attitude to the cultural heritage of the past. In spite of the movement of the "Leftists" the real historic development of Soviet art proceeded on the principle of *critical assimilation of the art of past centuries*.

As a result of persistent and profound work on new Soviet themes, on the phenomena of living realities, combined with critical assimilation of the art of past centuries and the acquisition of real craftsmanship, Soviet art began to master the creative method which determined the whole of its development, viz., *the method of socialist realism*.

Naturally, the creation of a style of socialist realism pre-supposes wide competition among the various art tendencies, and bold initiative on the part of our artists in their search for artistic form.

Soviet art is the art of the numerous peoples of the U.S.S.R. who are building up, in the words of Stalin "a culture that is national in form and socialist in content." Therefore, the style of socialist realism finds its expression in numerous national refractions, but within the art life of each people is very rich.

Yet, with all the great variety of creative methods and technical experiments, Soviet art is characterised by one common feature: the endeavour to express in images of art the new aspect of the country, the rapidly changing mode of life, the new thoughts, feelings, and aspirations of the millions of people shedding the vestiges of private-property-consciousness and becoming active builders of the new life.

It stands to reason that the peculiarities of Soviet art, the specific atmosphere in which it develops, have created entirely novel conditions of life and work for the artists. They no longer depend on the whims of wealthy patrons, or on the tastes of a narrow circle of art lovers. In the Land of Soviets the painter, the architect, the actor, the film producer, etc., has been relieved once and for all of the anxiety lest the product of his art should find no sale—so wide has become the demand for works of art.

The creative work of the architect proceeds at a time when new public buildings and residential houses are being extensively constructed.

For the Soviet actor there is no unemployment, not even a dull season; the Soviet theatre works the whole year round everywhere. Moreover, scores and hundreds of new theatres are being built in towns and villages for the various peoples of the Soviet Union.

The painter, the engraver, the sculptor, are always assured of work. They are supported by a wide system of State and public orders and assignments. Contracts are signed with painters and sculptors under which they receive monthly allowances during the whole time they work on their assignments. The pictures and sculptures produced under such contracts become the property of state and public organisations, or of the artist's

co-operative organisations. The best of the works turned out under contracts are usually placed in the museums, exhibited in travelling exhibitions, and so on.

Of course, a great many of the works of artists and sculptors are also directly purchased by State museums and galleries.

The tremendous demand for works of art and the constant attention given by the toiling masses of this country to artists of various kinds, assure all the possibilities for the highest development of creative art.

We may point to a number of theatrical productions and cinema films, to particular works of art in painting, graphics and sculpture, which signify the birth of the great style of socialist realism.

Following upon a series of Soviet art exhibitions, and upon a series of demonstrations of Soviet films, the present symposium constitutes a further step in acquainting the intellectual circles of the world with the creations of the Soviet masters of the arts.

We trust that this collection will greatly contribute towards the establishment of a mutual understanding and a cultural *rapprochement* between the people of the Soviet Union and the English-speaking peoples, thereby serving the great cause of peace.

A. Y. Arosev,
*President of the All-Union Society for
Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries.*

ARCHITECTURE

By Prof. D. ARKIN, Secretary of the Society of Soviet Architects

In order to get a clear idea of the distinguishing features in Soviet architecture, it is necessary first of all to note its two basic characteristics. In the first place, the basic subjects of architectural work in the U.S.S.R. are structures of a mass character: public buildings, workers' clubs, "palaces of culture," etc., and also residential houses for workers of all categories.

Secondly, it should be noted that every architectural production in the U.S.S.R. is indissolubly bound up with a unified *General Plan*, which determines the economic and cultural development of the country.

During the period of the First Five-Year Plan and the commencement of the Second, a wide field of activity presented itself for architecture. The construction of hundreds of new industrial enterprises, the rise of whole new industrial cities, the intensive growth and reconstruction of the old cities—all this great process of construction confronted architecture with a number of entirely new problems. Soviet architecture was called upon to create entirely new types of buildings unprecedented in old architectural practice.

It is sufficient to point out, for instance, such an architectural project as a workers' club as it exists in the U.S.S.R. From the point of view of architecture it constitutes an entirely new type of building which had never been erected before. It accommodates within its walls a studio-theatre, a gymnasium, a nursery, a library and reading room, halls for meetings, classrooms, etc. Architecture is faced with the task of imparting an organic integral character to the combination of these heterogeneous elements.

Such workers' clubs have been erected in all the large towns of the U.S.S.R. without exception. Side by side with this type of edifice, numerous "palaces of culture" have been erected—more elaborate archi-

tectural structures, designed to serve the cultural requirements of many thousands of people. As an example of this kind, the Palace of Culture, which is being erected in the Lenin district of Moscow, may be mentioned. This structure, already partly completed, contains the following main sections: (1) The Little Theatre and Cinema with a 1,100 seat capacity; (2) the Large Theatre with 4,000 seats; (3) the Club premises for 4,000 people, comprising halls for exhibitions, libraries, auditoriums, rooms for games, a winter garden, laboratories, experimental workshops, a restaurant, etc.; and (4) a kindergarten and a nursery.

While edifices like workers' clubs and palaces of culture demanded that the architect finds entirely new solutions in regard to the planning and internal organisation of the edifice, the problems confronting him in the construction of the residential buildings were no less serious. The enormous growth of the cities (it should be noted in this connection that from 1914-1934 the urban population of the former Russian Empire has grown from 25 to 39 million people) has put to the fore the most urgent problem of increasing the housing facilities to the utmost. Soviet architecture proceeded to develop new types of dwelling-houses to meet the new requirements of the country. It should be mentioned that several years ago some extremely radical projects were proposed by individual Soviet architects in this connection. Thus, it was proposed to erect huge "house communes" to accommodate several thousand people. In these house-communes one section was to be set aside for adults, another for small children, a third for children of medium age, etc. Only small rooms were to be retained for personal use, all the rest being destined for collective use—collective kitchens, dining-rooms, children's rooms, reading-rooms, etc. Soviet architecture, however, rejected this method of



A. GERASIMOV : Stalin at the Sixteenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party.

constructing residential houses, considering such purely mechanistic collectivisation to be entirely inadmissible. The new dwelling should afford the maximum facilities for individual development. The conception of the new type of dwelling should provide for the most widely organised collective services in regard to various cultural and economic requirements as well as for a sufficiently broad system of residential units answering all the requirements of individual and family life.

* This is precisely what the method of Soviet architecture does. It equips the new houses and city blocks with special premises for clubs, reading-rooms, kindergartens and public dining-rooms. On the one hand, Soviet architecture refrains from constructing skyscraper tenements, and on the other hand, from constructing villas and cottages. The most popular type of residential house in large Soviet towns is one of five or six storeys. It should be noted that in a whole number of new residential constructions, special attention has been given to the needs of those categories and groups of residents for whom they are intended. It ought to be borne in mind that the principal builders of residential houses in the U.S.S.R. are the building co-operatives, the State organs, and the Soviets. This circumstance not only serves as an absolute deterrent to any planless construction because of any individual fancy of the builder, but it also allows for extremely minute provision in the architectural draft as regards co-ordination with the general building plan of the city, as well as with the wishes and needs of the prospective tenants. Thus, for instance, in Moscow, Leningrad, Sverdlovsk, Kharkov, Rostov and other cities, special dwelling-houses are built for engineers and technicians. In Moscow an entire village of residential houses for artists, with a commodious studio in each apartment, can be seen. This village was built by the artist's co-operative building society, and was subsidised by the State.

Special villages are built for students and so forth. Of course, all these large architectural subjects—clubs, dwelling-houses, palaces of culture, stadiums, schools, rest houses, sanatoria, etc.—are but a part of a wider and principal subject of Soviet architecture. This subject is on the one hand the reconstruction of the city as a whole, and on the other hand the building of entirely new cities. It may be stated without any exaggeration that the basic object on which

Soviet architecture is working is the city considered as a unit of a single architectural whole.

The building of new cities is most closely linked up with the industrialisation of the country. New industrial centres arise, and new cities are born in places that used to be absolutely desolate. It stands to reason that in connection with such new city construction it is possible to adopt most widely new methods of planning and building; various sections of a new city may be organised as integral architectural ensembles.

An entirely new city of this type, for instance, is the city of Magnitogorsk, which has risen amid the Ural Mountains. It emerged around the new gigantic metallurgical works, the largest iron and steel smelting plant in Europe. Formerly this site was absolutely uninhabited. Similarly, on the Dnieper, near the huge Dnieper Hydro Electric Power Plant, a new city known as Bolshoye Zaporozhye has appeared. This city comprises seven districts, each with its own independent cultural, social and administrative centres which are subordinate to the common urban centre. Each section, besides residential quarters, has its kindergartens, nurseries, schools, clubs and other cultural establishments. Considerable areas are reserved for the laying out of parks and gardens.

New cities have arisen, and continue to arise, in all parts of the Soviet Union. Thus, beyond the Polar Circle, five years ago the new city of Igarka was founded, which has now become the cultural centre of the extreme north. In Siberia, the new city of Stalinsk is being built in the midst of a vast coal-mining region. A new city, Avrostroy, has been built near the city of Gorky, in the vicinity of the new automobile works. New cities are springing up in the remotest eastern regions, in Central Asia and in Siberia.

The building and architectural planning of the new cities are based on the following principles: (1) The fullest possible union of the interests of production with the interests of the inhabitants; (2) the utmost development of social enterprises serving the needs of the residents, e.g., kindergartens, public dining-rooms, clubs, laundries, etc.; (3) the division of the city into zones—industrial, residential, etc., and the rational connection between these zones. An important feature is the organic connection between residences and the workers' clubs, factory-kitchens, kindergartens, athletic fields and play-

grounds. The method of "linear construction" (*Zeilenbau*, as the Germans call it), which usually imparts a monotonous and drab appearance to a city block, has been sharply modified here, as the dwelling-houses are interspersed with the aforesaid public service structures. Thus, the city blocks do not consist of monotonous blocks and "lines," but acquire the more expressive forms of architectural ensembles with definite compositional centres. Central squares and thoroughfares are thus established.

A new object of architectural planning is the building up of new agricultural centres. Here we find architectural planning applied to the agricultural areas. During recent years a number of collective farm areas in various parts of the country have advanced the task of the practical architectural planning of agricultural areas, of the creation of new architectural forms for residential and public buildings in the Soviet village. Worthy of special attention is such a fact as the calling of a special conference of architects in far-away Kabarda in the Caucasian mountains, to which leading architects of the Soviet Union were invited, and at which local peasants spoke on numerous problems of construction. This gives clear testimony to the tremendous part that will be played by architecture in the Soviet village.

As we have already mentioned, together with the building of new cities, a highly important task for Soviet architecture is the reconstruction of the old urban centres, a particularly complicated problem from the standpoint of architectural reconstruction of purely oriental cities in places like the Central Asia republic — Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Tadzhikistan—and also in Transcaucasia, Kasakstan and other eastern regions of the U.S.S.R. These regions were purely agrarian in the past. Until the very time of the Revolution, with the exception of a few localities, they had retained the feudal mode of life and economy almost intact. The remodelling of the entire social life after the Revolution, the intensive growth of industry, the mechanisation of agriculture, and the adoption of collective methods in agriculture have completely changed the appearance of all these eastern regions. The aspect of the oriental city is also changing radically. Instead of the primitive oriental townships and the so-called *kishlaks* (villages) as were even the largest centres of the Soviet East, such as Alma-Ata (centre of Kasakstan) or Dushambe, now Stalinabad (centre of Tadzhikistan), or Ashkhabad (centre of Turk-

menistan, modern cities of the new type are emerging. It goes without saying that the architects working on the plans of these cities, and the projects for the new houses in them, must take due stock of all the peculiar local conditions, climatic, geographical and national. In the reconstruction of oriental cities the architect pays the closest attention to those forms of the old architecture which harbour the valuable experience of the past, at the same time rejecting those old forms which represent survivals of the feudal epoch and which are alien to the social conditions of the Soviet East. In this connection we must refer also to the quite exceptional problem involved in the creation of new types of habitations for the nomadic tribes settling on the land. Instead of the old *kibitka* and *yurta* (travelling vans and tents), the nomads are now striving to acquire permanent homes. A number of Soviet architects are working at present on specific forms of abode to facilitate for such people the transition from nomad life to settled life under the conditions of the Steppe regions of Kasakstan and Kirghizia.

In speaking of the reconstruction of old urban centres it must be emphasised first of all that the Soviet architect engaged in city building is in possession of a weapon of tremendous force—a plan, planned urban economy—as all the property in the town is held by the municipality and not by a multitude of private owners. The single plan, the single programme for building up and extending city territory, allows for the most rational allocation of industrial plants, residences, parks and gardens, and public buildings.

At the same time the plan also constitutes a most vital *artistic* factor. In creating the new face of the city, the Soviet architect has the possibility of reducing to a single design—not only in an economic and administrative respect, but also in regard to artistic execution—everything that is built anew and everything that was built in the past upon the territory of a given city. The architect has the possibility of thinking and creating in entire great complexes. From the fraction to the whole, from the separate house to the entire street, to the entire neighbourhood, and to the entire city—such is the road of Soviet architecture. As a case in point mention may be made of the reconstruction of Moscow, the capital of the U.S.S.R., a reconstruction that is going on at the present moment and which has already managed within a few years to change the face of the

city. Work is going on there at present for the creation of mighty main thoroughfares forming the basic hubs of the metropolitan plan, for the planting of new trees, shrubs, etc., for the reconstruction of the embankments, and for the building of huge residential units along the riverside. This tremendous work is directed from a single centre—the Architectural and Planning Bureau of the Moscow Soviet—and is carried out by twenty-three architectural and planning studios, with a responsible architect in charge of each studio. These studios take care also of such details of city decoration as the outside painting of buildings.

In the Soviet (notably in the Moscow) studios, architects of different styles and artistic tendencies are at work. It should be mentioned that until the present time the majority of Soviet architects were organised in a number of separate societies and associations, existing independently of each other. Two years ago all these societies united into a single organisation—the Union of Soviet Architects. This union, however, while aiming to bring together all the architectural forces for the accomplishment of huge new tasks, by no means implied the levelling out of the various creative and artistic tendencies in Soviet architecture. On the contrary, the life of Soviet architecture is built upon the principle of broad *creative competition* between the various architectural tendencies. It is only as the result of such competition that the new artistic language and new style of architecture can be found. Nevertheless, certain more general tendencies have already manifested themselves in Soviet architecture. It is necessary to dwell briefly on this question—on the question of artistic tendencies and quests in Soviet architecture.

The contemporary architecture of the U.S.S.R. has inherited a fairly deplorable legacy from the pre-revolutionary past. In Russian architecture of the pre-war epoch there was a prevalence of eclecticism, of imitation of the old styles, from the ancient Russian style of architecture to the various shades in the spirit of the Italian Renaissance. A considerable role was played also by the decadent *style moderne* and the *Jugendstil* which had been borrowed from Germany. Under such conditions during the first post-revolutionary years an appreciable part was played by the new currents which arose in Soviet architecture under the slogans of “functionalism” and “constructivism.”

The majority of the architects followed

quite original paths in this respect, assimilating only in part the experience of similar tendencies in Western Europe. While struggling against architectural eclecticism and imitation of the old styles, these new tendencies endeavoured to master the new industrial technique (particularly great attention being accorded to reinforced concrete construction), to rationalise architectural plans, to achieve the most economical solutions in regard to internal space. Nevertheless, the methods of “functional architecture” could satisfy the requirements of Soviet society only during the first period of construction when it was necessary to meet the most vital and urgent needs in regard to new buildings and residences. At that time it was permissible to rest content with the simplest, the most economical architectural solutions, preferring no particularly high claims in regard to the artistic, plastic quality of architecture.

There was a radical change in the situation towards the close of the First-Five-Year Plan period. The growth of material well-being and the extremely rapid rise in the cultural level of the broad masses was manifested in higher requirements regarding the quality of construction, notably in regard to the artistic quality of the new structures. The commencement of the great work of reconstructing cities had brought the problem of artistic quality to the fore. Among broad circles of Soviet architects, swayed as they were to a considerable extent by the principles of “functionalism,” a great movement for a revision of the old methods of work began. This revision touched first of all on the question of the artistic content of architecture. Without rejecting a number of valuable elements created by “functionalism” and “constructivism,” notably in the introduction of new building materials and in the rationalisation of plans, a considerable section of the Soviet architects subjected the principles of these currents to a thorough criticism. Thus, for instance, it was pointed out that “constructivism,” in its endeavour to exhaust the entire artistic content of architecture by the forms of the technique itself, had led to what might be called the “fetishism” of technique. It had raised the machine to an æsthetic ideal, which led to the peculiar canons of a new formalism. As for the doctrine of “functionalism,” which had proclaimed the concept of the “function” of a given structure as the basic content of architecture, this concept was treated in too narrow a

sense, since it reduced itself merely to technical and biological factors, entirely ignoring such a question as the artistic effect and the artistic content of architecture. In this manner some of the exponents of "functionalism" arrived at a complete negation of architecture as an art, arguing that architecture was not an art, and so on.

In the course of the lively debates and discussions among Soviet architects in recent years, this point of view was categorically rejected. All the architectural currents agreed that Soviet architecture should not only create technically most advanced and economical structures, but that it should also fill these structures with great artistic content concordant with the great historic epoch in which we are living. Not to subjugate the architecture to technique, but to master all the means of technique in order to create full-valued architectural works—such is the task which faces the contemporary architect. Similarly, the architectural work cannot be exhausted merely by the function of the structure. The structure represents a complex unity of technical function and artistic form, but it is unity not of a mechanical, but rather of an organic nature.

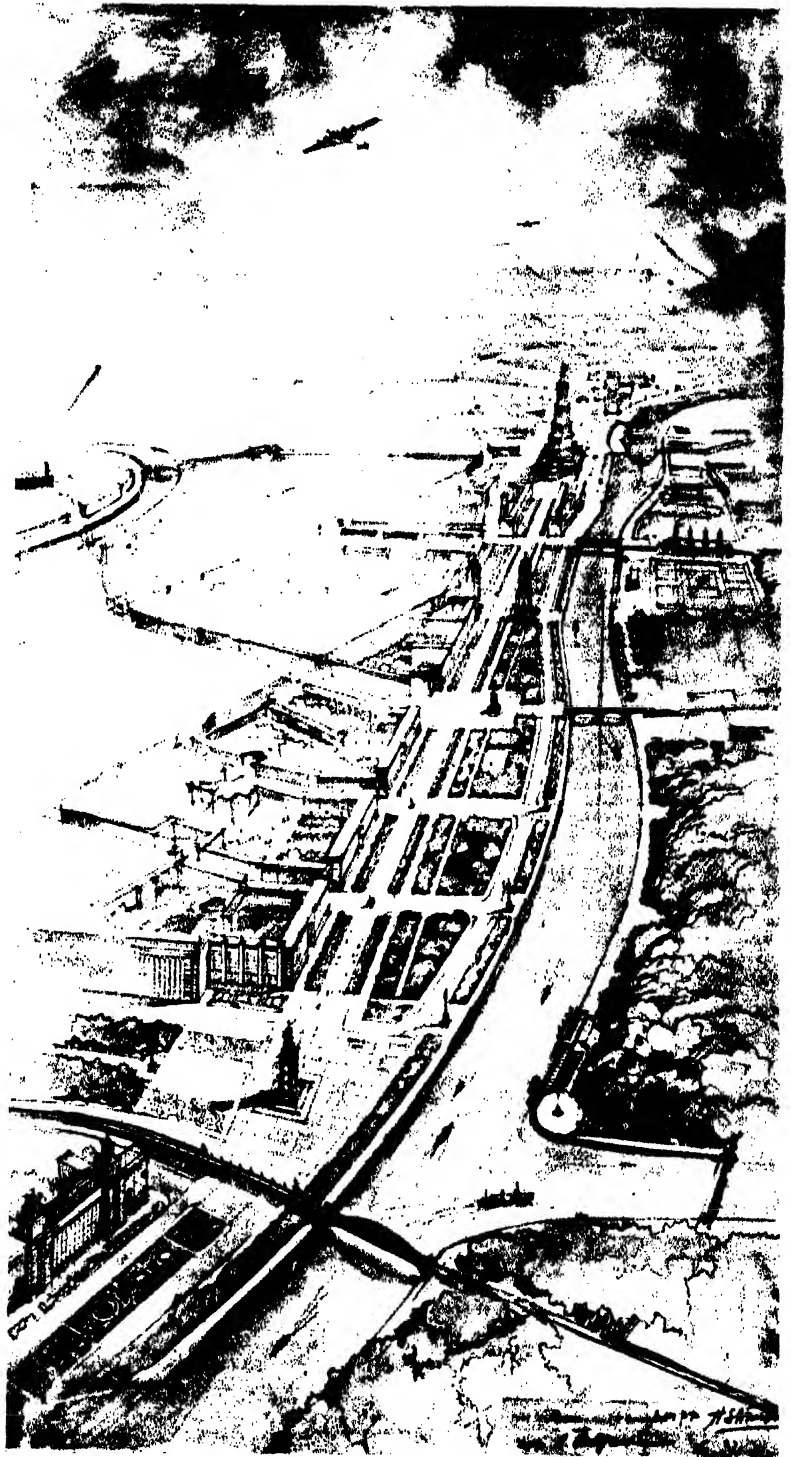
All these questions arose before Soviet architecture with particular force when it was called upon to solve the enormous task of designing the Palace of Soviets in Moscow. This edifice, with its halls for 20,000 and 6,000 people, should represent not only a huge centre of social life, but an architectural monument to the Revolution. The numerous proposals submitted in a series of contests for this structure have demonstrated the tremendous importance of the problem of artistic expression in architecture. In order to find new forms for this expression, one must be able to make critical use of the best that has been created by world architecture in the past. Soviet architecture rejects all eclectic imitation of the old styles, but it

deems it necessary to reform in its own way everything of value in the experience of world architecture. In this respect Soviet architecture follows the precept of Lenin, who taught that the culture of the new society inherits and critically re-forms everything great and valuable that has been created throughout the history of mankind.

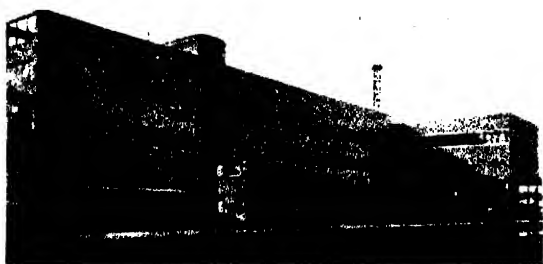
Soviet architecture is now passing through a period of intense quests for new forms, for new style. These quests are developing in an atmosphere of broad creative competition between the various tendencies in Soviet architecture. It may be said that all these tendencies are now endeavouring to find such forms as would give architectural expression to our epoch, as would be imbued with the *motifs* of optimism and buoyancy, as would interpret in the language of architecture the whole multifornity of creation embodied in life itself. The Soviet architects now have a wide field for creative quests and activity because, during the past few years, together with the general process of the reconstruction of cities, the construction of a number of great and varied structures has been undertaken. Such are, for example, the new great theatres—the theatre of the Red Army in Moscow, theatres at Rostov, Sverdlovsk, Novosibirsk, Ivanovo, Tashkent, Ashkhabad; the huge structure of the "Palace of Technique" in Moscow; "Parks of Culture and Rest" in a number of cities, which combine the park architecture proper with various structures of an educational, sports and theatrical character; the numerous stadiums and athletic fields; the huge rest homes and sanatoria in the Caucasus, on the Crimean shore and elsewhere; the numerous structures connected with industry and transport, and so on. All this offers wide possibilities for Soviet architecture to create works of great architectural value.

Socialist realism is the sign under which Soviet architecture is marching forward.

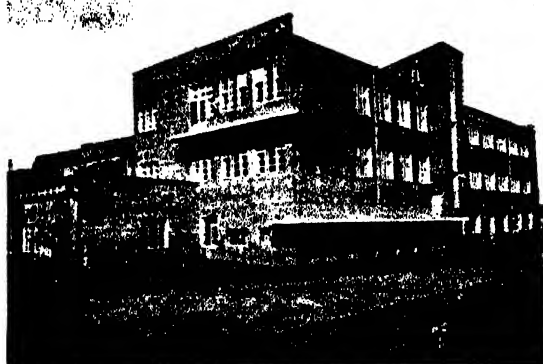
ARCHITECTURE



A project for the Avenue of the
Palace of Soviets.



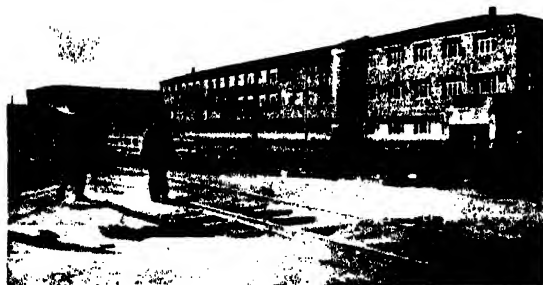
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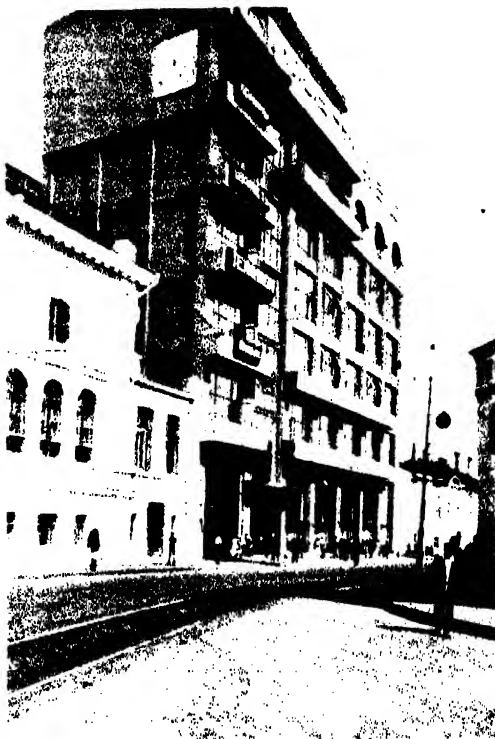
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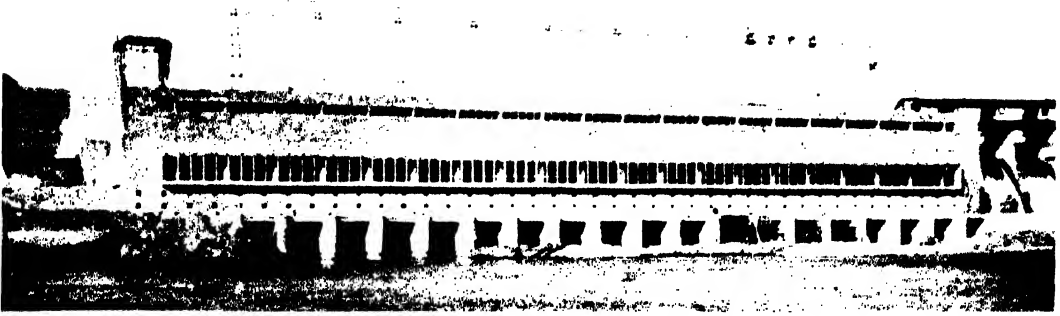


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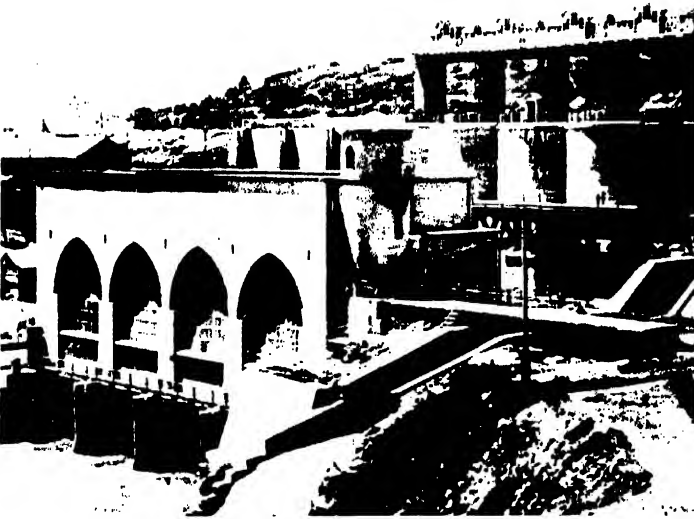


1, 2, 3 and 4. Four views of buildings in Tractorstroi, a new town a few miles from Stalingrad, and the centre of the tractor industry. 5. A newspaper office in Moscow.

THE DNEIPER DAM

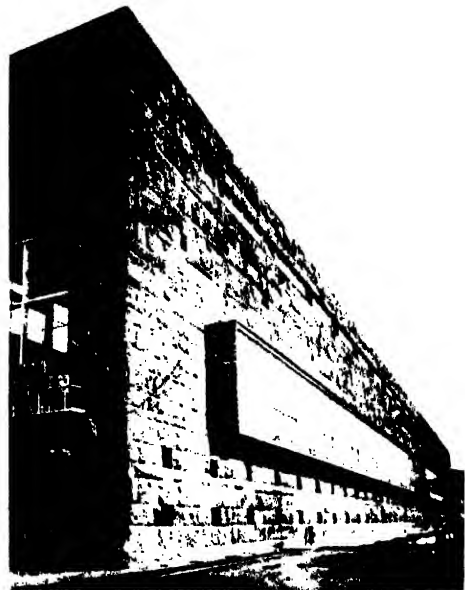


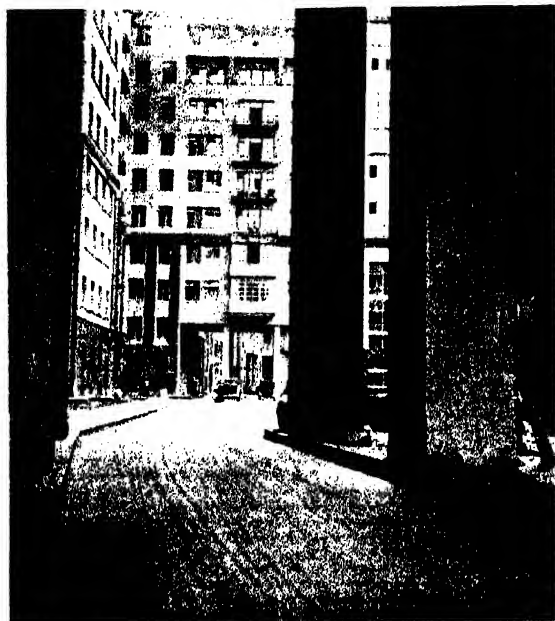
HYDRO-ELECTRIC STATION, TIFLIS



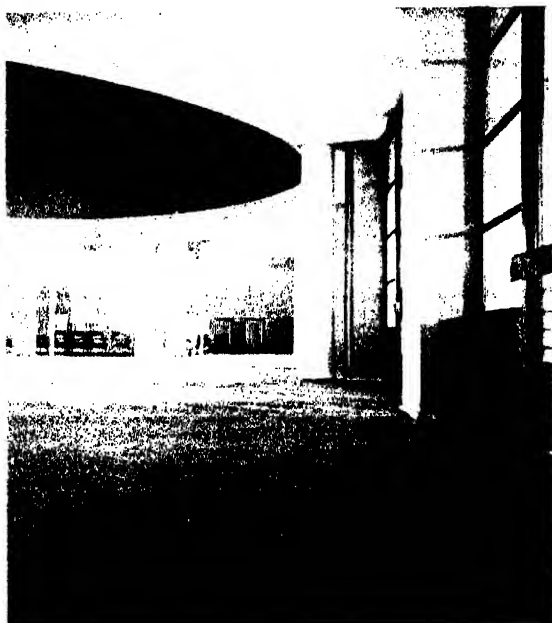
The Dnieper dam and hydro-electric station are the work of the architect V. Vesnin. The station at Tiflis is part of a Lenin memorial scheme.

THE DNEIPER HYDRO - ELECTRIC STATION





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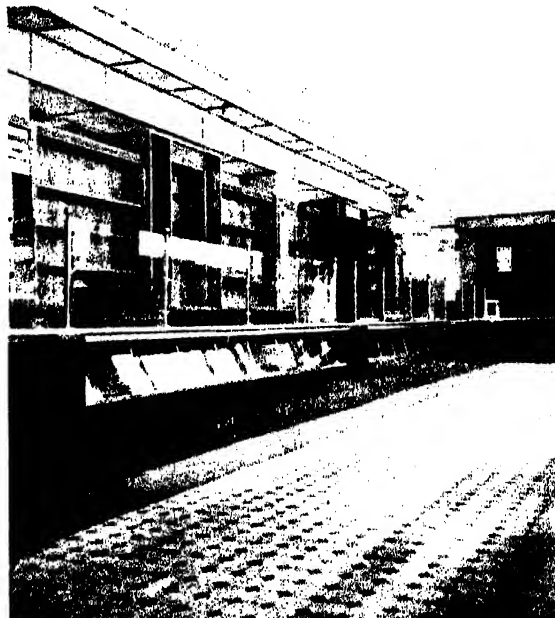
APARTMENT BUILDING FOR CIVIL SERVANTS IN MOSCOW

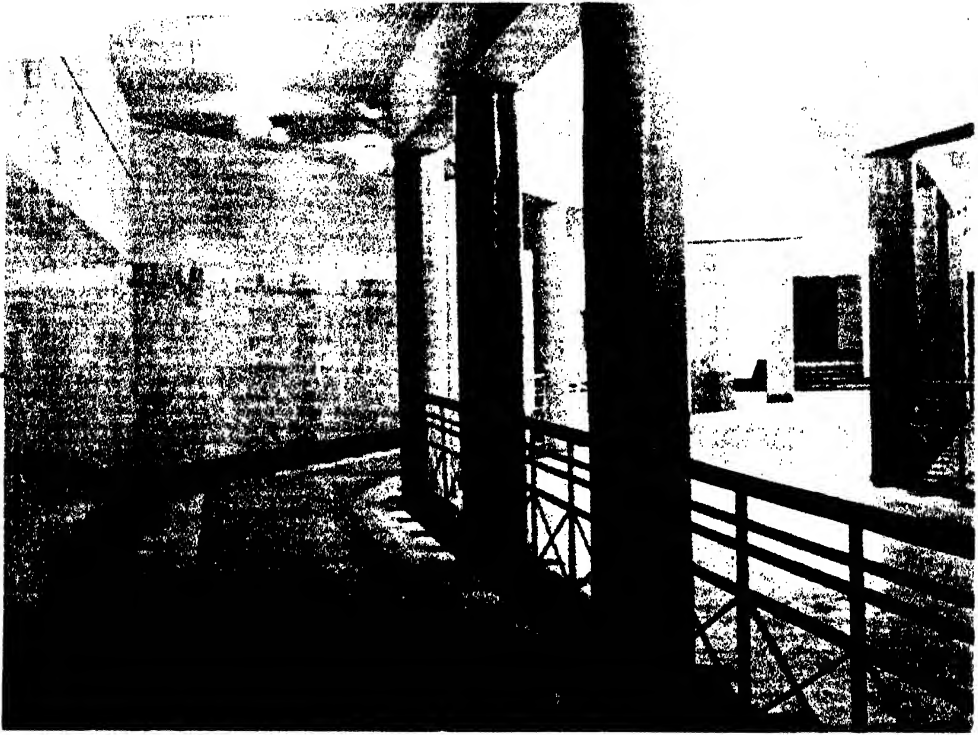
1. A view of the exterior of the building. 2. The vestibule of a theatre built into the same block. 3. The interior of the theatre. 4. A store incorporated in the same building.

3



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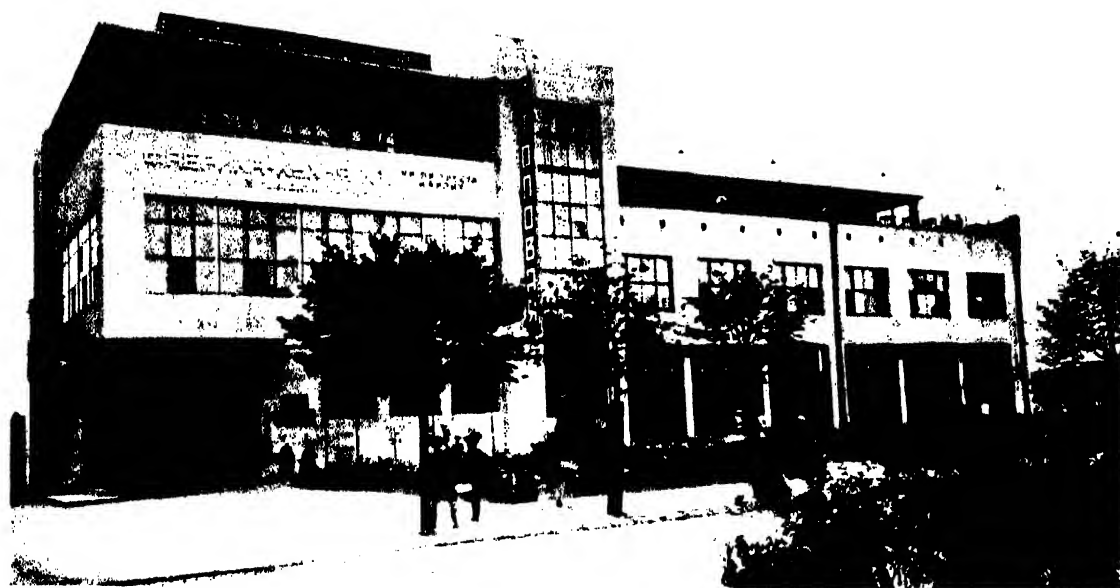
The new Moscow Underground Railway ; a vestibule, corridor and station.

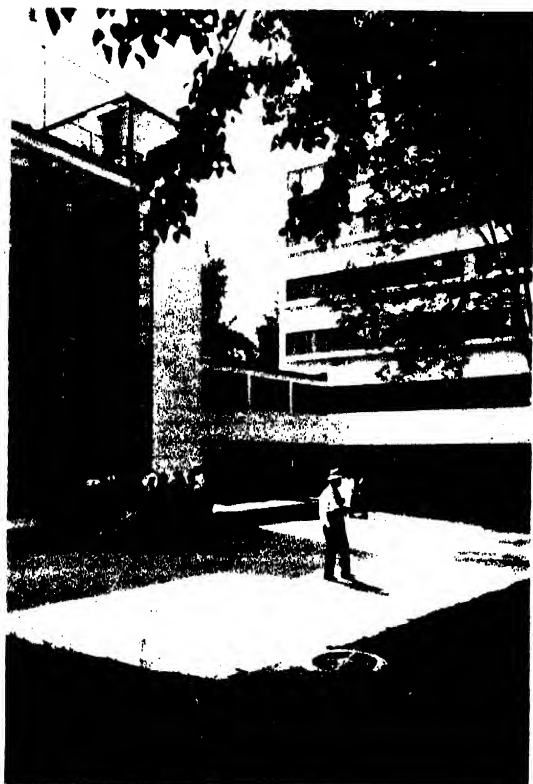




The House of Projects, Kharkov.

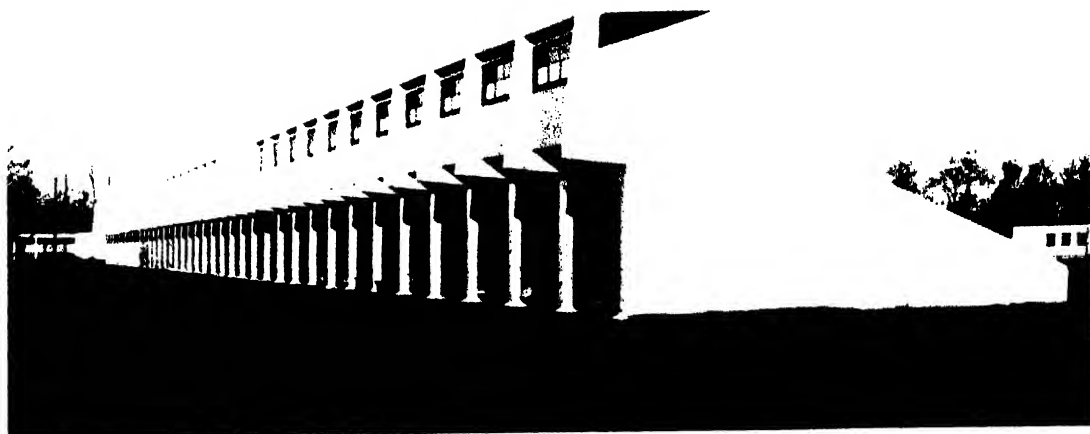
Moscow communal kitchen and dining-room.





Above : Two views of an apartment building in Moscow for workers in the Ministry of Finance. Below : A sanatorium at Sochi (Caucasus)





Above : " Red Sport International " stadium of the metal workers in Kharkov. Designed by architects A. NIKOLSKY and K. KASHIN.
Below : A stadium in Moscow.



PAIN TING

By A. BASSEKHES

The life of Soviet pictorial art in the last two years has been marked by a number of significant events.

The great exhibitions held in Moscow reviewing the achievements in art for fifteen years were visited by hundreds of thousands of spectators—factory workers, collective farmers, Red Army men, and students. These exhibitions have shown the path taken by Soviet art, its trend towards the depiction of definite subjects, towards realism.

This new realistic art has emerged in a country whose art was so recently influenced to a great extent by traditions of formalism, the cult of pure craftsmanship, art devoid of themes, methods inherited from the period of infatuation with cubism, "left" romanticism, "left" rationalism, a predilection for the primitive and for impressionistic sketching.

The inception of the new realistic art in the U.S.S.R. does not imply merely a change of theme. It signifies the birth of a new enthusiasm, or more precisely the creative assimilation by art of the enthusiasm of Socialist construction.

The Soviet State and public organisations afford the Soviet artists opportunities of becoming acquainted with the new life of the country and its Socialist construction. All the more or less significant Soviet artists, young and old, make extended annual trips (at the expense of the Government or of public organisations) to the collective farms, to the constituent Republics of the Soviet Union, to the sites of the more important new industrial constructions, in order to become acquainted on the spot with the new landscapes that have been transformed by the hand of history, and with the new people of the Land of Soviets.

The constructive work of the U.S.S.R. has been portrayed by the Soviet artists in many scores of canvases: the Dnieper hydro-electric power plant, the Magnitogorsk

iron works, life in the new collective farms, the public *chaikhane* (tea rooms) of Central Asia, the Arctic icefields conquered by the *Kiassin*, the *Malyguin* and by the men of the *Chelyuskin*, and last but not least, the construction of the underground railway in Moscow.

Soviet art, however, pursues considerably higher aims than the mere pictorial fixation of the phenomena of Soviet reality.

The Soviet artists endeavour to create canvases not only new as to the theme, but also imbued with a new conception, disclosing the life of the new man and the entire inner meaning of human relationships in the Soviet Union. This new content of art must be clothed also in new realistic forms, essentially its own. Such is the slogan of Soviet art and art criticism.

Soviet art, in its search for new forms, least of all tends towards the uncritical breaking with the past that was advocated by the novelty-hunters of the "left-currents" which have followed each other in rapid succession.

The revolt of the cubists and futurists against "museum art," against "Venus de Milo," against Raphael, has lost its influence. Soviet artists now recognise the priceless value of the art legacy possessed by mankind.

The Soviet artist does not turn to the art of the past in order to see, even in a superb historic example, a prototype which he must merely reincarnate a second time. Averse to "stylism" and retrospectivism, Soviet art has chosen a far more difficult road for the assimilation of the past, while not turning aside from reality nor lowering the banner of realism. The great masters of the past are akin to the Soviet artists in that they, too, had not been advocates of the abstract, self-sufficient form. Their art at the time was purposeful, topical in the best sense of the term. The peculiarity of form in their art, its classic completeness, was the direct result of great thought and of great feeling.

Soviet art is exceedingly varied as to shadings of style, as to formal variants in the treatment of reality, as to the very approach of art to reality. The sources of this variety should be looked for in the extreme multi-formity of Soviet reality, as well as in the contradictory art traditions of the epoch immediately preceding October, and the cross influences of the national art cultures that are asserting themselves more and more in the artistic life of the Soviet Union.

Soviet art does not endeavour to level styles, to standardise forms and genres. In matters of art Soviet artists as a whole are in favour of open competition between the various creative tendencies, discountenancing the attempts of any group to proclaim itself as the sole legitimate "troubadour" of the epoch.

Of the art schools and currents that occupy a definite place in Soviet art the following are worthy of special mention :

The group of artists of the Academic current. In this group should be classed, in the first place, the artists I. Brodsky, V. Yakovlev, the Korin brothers, and Ryangina, although individually they are far from homogeneous as to ideological content.

They are all masters who are fond of creating large canvases. The dry sketch forms the basis of their compositions.

Of the artists of this group, particular popularity is enjoyed by I. Brodsky, the author of refined landscapes reminiscent of Breughel and Millet, and of a number of portraits and historical pictures. In his large thematic canvases depicting mass scenes, various public meetings, gatherings, etc., Brodsky closely approaches the realistic art of Repin, whose pupil he had been in the Academy of Arts. Of his big compositions mention should be made of *The Shooting of the 26 Baku Commissars*, *The Session of the Second Congress of the Third International*, a series of portraits of leaders of the Revolution, etc. The outstanding merit of Brodsky lies in the fact that his influence and his example have been instrumental in the development of a broad movement among artists to devote their brushes to the portrayal of the Revolutionary realities.

The most orthodox advocate of the neo-Academic trend in Soviet art is V. Yakovlev who, with great technical virtuosity, recreates a series of genre scenes in the spirit of the old Flemish school. Of the two Korin brothers, Pavel Korin, who has painted an interesting portrait of Maxim Gorky, is particularly well known.

Side by side with this trend, mention should be made of another branch of stylistic Academicism which unites the representatives of the most influential pre-revolutionary art group, the "World of Art," including Bogayevsky, Ostroumova-Lebedeva, Lancere and others. All these masters, who formerly were under the influence of retrospective stylistic art and decorativism, have greatly changed in the course of the post-revolutionary period. Bogayevsky, the bard of "heroic landscapes" and ancient ruins, is now re-creating the panorama of the construction of the Dnieper hydro-electric power plant; Ostroumova-Lebedeva paints the prospect of the new Leningrad, while Lancere creates symbolical-emblematical ornaments for new Soviet edifices.

The young artists, Pavlov and Dornidontov, who stand close to this current, are turning to the new themes even more decidedly. They are endeavouring to find the pictorial means for the romantic portrayal of the industrial fervour of Soviet construction.

Close to this current are also the two oldest Soviet landscape painters, Krymov and Academician Byalinitsky-Birulya. The former has produced a series of splendid industrial landscapes, and the latter has painted the "Gigant" state farm, a number of agricultural Soviet landscapes and, during the last two years, has produced an interesting series of paintings of the Soviet North.

The same turn to new themes and to the new realism may also be traced in the creations of Petrov-Vodkin, Pavel Kuznetsov and M. Saryan, who formerly had also belonged to the "World of Art" current but had introduced into it a certain trend of orientalism, neo-primitivism, and Gauguin-Matisse colourfulness.

Each of these artists has a clearly-defined creative individualism. Petrov-Vodkin is a great master who has succeeded in combining the wealth of colour and intensity of the old icon-painting with the rationalistic rules of classic composition. Of late he has created several genre pictures and portraits which testify to his turn towards realism. Especially remarkable are his *Self-portrait*, *Girl at the Window* and the large composition, *The Death of the Commissar*, which are perhaps the best things turned out by the artist in his many years of creative work.

Another painter of this group, Pavel Kuznetsov, some twenty years ago showed in his creations a certain phase of the Gauguin flight from culture and civilisation to the



P. KONCHALOVSKY : The Artist and his Wife.

sources of Oriental national primitiveness. In delicate colours he painted the "placid landscapes" and "unsophisticated life" of nomadic Kirghizia. Of late the same artist has painted a series of pictures depicting industrial construction in the eastern republics of the Soviet Union. Instead of nomadic tents and *kibitkas* (vans) we see oil refineries and Cowper blowers (of the industrial giants) emerging on the Steppes and mountains. In turning to the new themes, the artist has sacrificed none of the gay, somewhat decorative brilliance of his palette. He has accepted Socialist construction as a new source of joy.

The same path has been taken by Saryan, the most outstanding artist of Soviet Armenia, who combines French artistic culture with the national cultural traditions of his native land.

In their impressive fresco paintings, Bruni and Favorsky, better known as graphic artists, are fairly close to this group. Interesting are their frescoes in the Moscow Museum for the Protection of Mother and Child.

One cannot help stressing the particular importance of the group of masters of Russian Post-Impressionism and Cézannism who number in their ranks such great artists as P. Konchalovsky, I. Mashkov, A. Lentulov, V. Rozhdestvensky, Kuprin, Ossmerkin and others.

Formerly, these artists were opposed to the introduction of a theme into painting, against the introduction of the literary element into pictorial art. "The picture itself above everything" was written on their banners. At present they are endeavouring to find new themes and subjects, while retaining all the freshness of their artistic perception of reality. The two who have gone the furthest along this path are Rozhdestvensky and Kuprin. The former, while not departing from his original style, has passed from sketches (landscapes and still-life) to large canvases depicting the many types of present-day man in action. The latter, a master of lyrical landscapes who has retained his old predilection for landscape motifs, has at the same time created vivid and colourful portrayals of the sites of industrial construction in the Soviet Union.

Less identified with the style of Socialist realism than any of the other artists in this group is P. Konchalovsky. But, from year to year, his art also is becoming less and less at variance with this style. At all events, there is realism in his work, a realistic atti-

tude to the objective laws of things and Nature which become palpable and acquire a sensuous freshness in Konchalovsky's pictures.

Three painters of considerable note, S. Gerasimov, Istomin and Chernyshev, only partly belong to this group of artists.

The path which S. Gerasimov has traversed has been an unusual one. The twilight pessimistic romanticism of his earlier canvases has given way to a stubborn quest for dramaticism which he imparts to all his subject pictures, a dramaticism expressed in the very colouring, in the very pictorial material of his works. S. Gerasimov is a realist endowed with individual vision, capable of lending a subjectively romantic colouring to the phenomena of reality without transgressing against the laws of its truthful portrayal.

Of his works, let us mention *The Fishermen* (1929), and the remarkable *Pledge of the Red Partizans* (1933).

Another artist who formerly adhered to the group of Russian Post-Impressionists, Istomin, is a master of landscape painting who has been greatly influenced by the French school of painting. In recent years the Impressionist colour scale in his works has been enriched with colourful motifs drawn by the artist from his study of primitives. This artist, also, changed the subject of his paintings. From sun-flooded interiors he passed to the painting of landscapes and people of the Land of the Soviets, while retaining the exquisiteness of his refined style of portrayal.

As distinguished from these two artists, Chernyshev, a great specialist in fresco painting, introduces the methods of fresco art into his paintings, in which soft, silvery colouring predominates.

It is characteristic that the masters of the most extreme currents in art, the widely popular artists of the past—Malyevich, the father of the "suprematism" that has become known far beyond the borders of the Soviet Union; Tatlin, the creator of the much talked about *Comintern Tower*; Filonov who essayed to transplant to Soviet soil a peculiar brand of German expressionism—are now passing through a period of crisis in their work. Malyevich and Filonov, after several years of inactivity, are again turning to painting, but their work now includes a certain element of realism. Tatlin, who has long since given up painting and has been working on a number of engineering projects, is beginning to work for the theatre as

scenic designer, apparently losing faith in the aesthetics of his engineering.

The position of D. Sterenberg, an eminent artist and teacher of a large group of young Soviet painters, has not yet become sufficiently clearly defined. D. Sterenberg is the most consistent exponent of the French form; he painted a series of still-lives executed in a refined manner, exquisite in colouring and choice of motifs. On his recent journeys through the Soviet Union this artist has made some studies in which he attempts to get a composite picture of Nature, which he used to split up into its elements.

Shevchenko, a gifted artist who has long wandered through the desert of formalism, is also drawing closer to realism.

Thus, even these extreme formalist groups of Soviet artists have been most strongly influenced by the new realistic tendencies of Soviet art.

The ideas of Socialist realism have also taken hold of the artists of the older generation who were associated with the traditions of the old naturalism of the *Peredvizhniki* (travelling artists, who exhibited their own works and shunned the exhibitions of the Academic salons) whose works expressed a definite subject or idea. We refer to Kotov, B. Yakovlev, Krainev and others.

K. Yvon and Igor Grabar, painters already widely famed before the Revolution, may also be classed in this group. The latter, a refined landscape painter of the Impressionist school, has painted his *Lenin at the Direct Wire* in the manner of the old Russian realists. To this group belongs also A. Gerasimov, the author of a number of mass portraits and of the excellent picture *Stalin at the Sixteenth Party Congress*.

However, the foremost artist of this group is B. Johanson. Younger than the other artists of this group, he paints his pictures in a rich pictorial manner which is characteristic of his entire creative work. He is the direct continuator of Repin's realism. His works are marked by careful psychological treatment of the subject, by truthfulness of type portrayal, and by great dramaticism.

Thus far we have spoken only of the artists of the older generation.

The trend towards realism which is common to all of them is even more clearly evidenced in the creations of the young artists who have received their art education and have gained prominence during the last fifteen years. Perhaps first among them is A. Deineka. This artist portrays the new people of the Soviet Union, most often

young athletic people who are shown in motion, as though photographed by a camera. The picturesque and colourful construction is clearly subordinated in his pictures to the linear graphic solution of the composition. He is a propagandist of the new social life, new urban landscapes drawn as though with the rule of an architect.

Side by side with Deineka is a group of young artists—Antonov, Vyalov, Zernova, Nissky—who to a considerable extent are akin to him.

As distinguished from these artists who introduce the graphic element into their pictures, G. Pimenov, A. Goncharov and P. Williams are sharp and expressive painters *par excellence*. The same may be said of Tischler, who has produced a number of valuable scenic decorations (he was the scenic designer for the Jewish Theatre in Moscow and for the State Theatre of the White-Russian Republic in Minsk).

A unique position is occupied by Samokhvalov and by Pakhomov. Samokhvalov, a former pupil of Petrov-Vodkin, has subordinated his brush to the task of painting definite subjects, even more decidedly than his teacher. He painted a number of portraits showing the new people of the U.S.S.R., vivid in colour and conception. A unique master in this group is S. Adlivankin.

Among the most gifted young Soviet painters are Bogorodsky and Ryazhsky who, in the last few years, have produced a number of great composition paintings and portraits of the new people. Soviet art has in Ryazhsky a thoughtful portrait painter who has painted a series of portraits of Soviet women. Recently, upon his return from Italy, Ryazhsky has painted a number of compositions and mass portraits, including his *A Political Talk with Red Army Men*, interesting in its arrangement of figures and its colouring. Remarkable is the grotesque and expressive pictorial work of the trio Kukryniksy, three artists who work jointly under the collective name of "Kukryniksy" made of the initial syllables of Kuprecanov, Krylov, and Nikolai Sokolov.

This striving after great compositional canvases and dramatic subjects is even more pronounced in the creations of the very youngest Soviet painters which have been shown in the great Moscow exhibition of "Young Painters." Mention should be made of Odintsov, Gaponenko and Bubnov.

For the many peoples of the Soviet Union the years after the October Revolution have been years of development in the artistic

culture of the various nationalities of the Union. Painters of the many nationalities of the Soviet Union—of the Ukraine, White-Russia, Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, etc.—have come to the fore.

To all of them the October Revolution opened the road to a free cultural development. These republics, the former colonies of Tsarist Russia, in which every striving towards a national original art had been ruthlessly crushed, are now experiencing a period of great development in their artistic culture.

Characteristic of the artists of these republics, as of the Russian Soviet artists, is the turn towards the new themes of the life around them, expressed, however, in the form peculiar to the respective art traditions of their peoples.

In this art no trace remains of that superficial orientalism and ethnographism which in the past has inevitably characterised the form and content of paintings portraying the life of the distant "borderlands."

Of the Ukrainian artists mention should first be accorded to A. Petritsky, a brilliant decorative artist, one of the best scenic painters of the Soviet Union, who at the same time is working on large canvases in which a certain influence of modern French art can be felt. His pictures are always original as to theme, and vivid and rich in treatment.

A group of Ukrainian painters—Boichuk, Shekhtman, Gvozdk, Padalka, Sedlar and others—are working on the problem of reviving the old monumental fresco painting.

The most orthodox representatives of this trend are Boichuk, a mature master who has thoroughly studied the methods of the ancient Ukrainian monumental fresco, and Shekhtman, who depicts dramatic scenes of revolutionary history in this same form.

The pupils of Boichuk—the young artists, Padalka and Sedlar—have in recent years largely overcome the somewhat dry fresco manner of their teacher and have found a more freer style for their work.

Prominent among the artists of Georgia is Lilo Gudeavshvili. Primitive folk art and Persian miniature painting have influenced the forms of his art, which is attracted by themes drawn from contemporary Soviet reality.

Opposite positions are held by Kakavadze and a number of young Georgian painters

who are endeavouring to overcome stylisation and ornamental orientalism.

The leading artist of Armenia, as has already been mentioned, is the noted artist Martiros Saryan. In his creations, as in the creations of many of the young artists of the Soviet East, there is an unusual combination of the influence of Matisse-Gauguin primitivism and the traditions of ancient Armenian art. Saryan's paintings are characterised by the purity and boldness of the colours in which the artist paints the sunny landscapes of Armenia.

The development of art and artists in the Central Asiatic Republics of the Soviet Union is particularly striking.

The October Revolution has released the artistic energy of the peoples of Asia who were forbidden by Islam in the past to portray human images. Of late a group of native artists including Abdulayev, Ural Tanachkabayev, Korakan, and others, has emerged in Uzbekistan. Together with the old masters, Benakov, Volkov and Kurzin, they are now actively engaged on the portrayal of the new life.

The same processes of the strengthening of national art forces and artistic culture, and its enrichment with new themes, is characteristic also of White Russia.

Of the national artists of this republic, Nen, V. Volkov, Pashkevich and Brazier should be noted.

Between all these national forces of Soviet art no sharp boundaries are drawn. The multiplicity of forms and of national art traditions, by which they are distinguished from each other, in the end serves the same purpose—to give a realistic portrayal of life and nature.

Some critics have tried to argue the point that the limit of artistic daring lies in experimenting with form, in innovations at any price, even at the price of forfeiting every vestige of art tradition and of alienating art from life.

It requires far greater daring to defy the risk of being labelled "publicists" and "propagandists" in turning to the new themes and genres which reach and agitate the minds of millions. It is the only road which will bring art back to those heights on which it once stood; it alone will enable the art of the future even to surpass those heights.

Great art is an art which resounds far and wide.

SCULPTURE

By Prof. B. TERNOVETZ, Director, Museum of Modern Western Art

I.—PATHS OF DEVELOPMENT.

The first chapter in the history of Soviet sculpture was opened by the initiative of Lenin in the realm of art. At the very height of the Revolution, in the summer of 1918, he came forth with a daring project—at short notice—to cover the squares and streets of Moscow and Leningrad with roughly executed monuments to the great revolutionaries, to the great creators in the domain of arts and sciences. Thus we saw how by the first October anniversary, scores of monuments had been executed, in plaster of Paris and cement—to Marx and Lassalle, Garibaldi, Robespierre, Heine, Radishchev, Bakunin, Perovskaya, Danton, Stepan Razin, and many others. Some of these were subsequently remade in durable materials, such as stone and bronze. Most of them, however, made of temporary material, lasted for only a relative short period.

The years of war communism, the years of famine and blockade, were at the same time years of great endeavours and daring ideas in all fields of art—in particular of sculpture. A series of projects for large monuments were created and a number of competitions for monuments was organised. Of the works of this period we shall note those executed in durable materials by the old generation of sculptors: N. Andreyev (designer of the Gogol monument in Moscow) erected the figure symbolizing the Revolution before the obelisk on Soviet Square; he also designed monuments to the revolutionary writers of the nineteenth century, Herzen and Ogarev, in front of the University building; Koponkov designed the memorial tablet on Red Square; Merkurov designed a monument to Marx for the city of Simbirsk. In the contest for a monument to Marx in Moscow, the winner was Aleshin.

Among the young sculptors of this period cubist and constructivist slogans enjoyed

great popularity; the latter penetrated also into the field of monument sculpture. As an instance of this the Bakunin monument in Moscow may be mentioned, executed by Korolev in a cubistic style.

The difficulties in the work of the sculptor, the results of the severe conditions of the civil war period, were overcome after the introduction of the New Economic Policy. The economic life of the country was rapidly coming to normality. New customers for works of art had been created by the Revolution—the public museums, the workers' clubs, and other new cultural institutions. The result was the formation of an organisation uniting Moscow sculpture—the "Society of Russian Sculptors." Almost simultaneously, a Sculptors' Section was formed within the numerically strongest art organisation—the "Association of Artists of the Revolution."

The rapid restoration of the national economy created new possibilities for monument sculpture as well. The All-Russian Agricultural Exhibition, held in Moscow in 1923, attracted a number of sculptors for the purpose of monumental decoration. Besides Kononov and Andreyev the most outstanding representatives of Russian pre-revolutionary sculptural art, Shadr, Strakhovskaya, and Zhurakovsky—new names brought to the fore by the Revolution—also participated in this work. In Leningrad Maniser erected a monument to Volodarsky, depicting him in the pose of a Tribune of the People, with his hand upraised. In Saratov, the capital of the Lower Volga, Korolev designed his memorial to the Revolution. In Moscow, Merkurov carved his somewhat schematised Timiryazev of granite. Aleshin, in collaboration with Koltsov, executed his multi-figured composition of the monument to Marx. The most impressive monument of the epoch is the Lenin monument designed by Shadr and

placed near Tiflis, on the dam of the Transcaucasian Hydro-Electrical Power Plant, in an extremely picturesque locality at the confluence of the Kura and Aragva rivers. This monument is one of the best monumental images of Lenin.

The turning of Soviet sculpture to the path of realistic art was quite clearly revealed in the Anniversary Exhibition organised by the People's Commissariat of Education. Soviet sculpture endeavours ever more deeply to reflect the surrounding realities in their most striking manifestations. As one of the most interesting and daring experiments in this respect, the creation of the *Avenue of Shock-Workers* in the Moscow Park of Culture and Rest should be noted.

Great interest is manifested by artists in the portrayal of types of the numerous nationalities inhabiting the vast territories of the Soviet Union, reflecting the astounding growth of culture of these formerly backward peoples. Themes most attractive to Soviet artists are physical culture, which embraces ever larger numbers of the proletariat, and the defence of the country, i.e., presentations of the life of the Red Army.

The growth of Soviet architecture, the building of new public squares and broad avenues calls for monumental adornment. Soviet architecture, which had long been under the influence of a severe schematism, is sharply veering around towards the new, pictorial style, rich in decorative *motifs*, in which the sculptor finds a vast field of application for his labour. Thus the gap between architecture and sculpture is already a matter of the past in so far as Soviet reality is concerned. All the new, large buildings in Moscow and other capitals and provincial centres are being adorned with statues, greatly increasing the decorative value and significance of such edifices. As an instance, we might mention the buildings now under construction in Moscow, such as the Moscow Soviet Hotel, the Meyerhold Theatre, the Workers' International Relief building and the Theatre of the Red Army.

II.—THE MASTERS.

The historic centres for the development of Soviet sculpture are Moscow and Leningrad, but of late eminent artist-sculptors are engaging in work in a number of republics of the Soviet Union. Thus the Ukraine has already brought to the fore a whole galaxy of talented sculptors: Kratko, Mitkovitzer, Gelman, Epstein, Buldin, Dindo, and

others. Georgia—Nikoladze, Kandelaki and Taladze; Armenia—Sarkissian, Stepanyan and others.

In Leningrad we may establish the presence of two basic currents: on the one hand, we find the exponents of academic naturalism, Lishev and Manizer. Lishev, the creator of the *Stalin and Voroshilov* group, had become prominent as a fine portraitist and an excellent teacher who has many disciples. Manizer is an experienced and prolific sculptor, somewhat dry in his treatment of form, the popular creator of numerous monuments erected in Leningrad and in the provinces (monument to Volodarsky in Leningrad, monument to Chapayev in Samara, monument to Lenin; a number of portraits—Kalinin, Essin, Glasunov and others). The other current of Leningrad sculptors is represented by Matveyev and his school. The influence exercised by Matveyev upon the rising generation of sculptors, not only in Leningrad but also in Moscow, is tremendous.

The most diversified creative currents and schools are to be found in Moscow. The *doyen* of Soviet sculpture, Domogatsky, is an eminent portraitist; he developed under the influence of sculptural Impressionism, of which he was the exponent in Russia, jointly with the late Golubkina and Andreyev.

To the older generation belong also the two Soviet animal sculptors, Vatagin and Yefimov. The former depicts the animal world more intimately, more penetratingly (*Bears, Tiger, Lynx and Boar*) whereas the latter approaches his theme with the freedom and breadth of a born decorator. Making excellent use of the most diversified material—forged copper, wood, bronze, papier-mâché—Yefimov gives bold solutions which startle by their colourfulness.

The most prominent exponent of realism in Soviet sculpture is Shadr. In a number of portraits (*Krassin, Lenin, The Artist's Mother*) figure compositions (*The Builder, Cobble-Stones, Weapon of the Proletariat*), and monuments (monument to Lenin at the Transcaucasian Hydro-Electric Power Plant), Shadr shows himself to be an experienced master.

Aleshin, the author of a number of decorative monuments, portraits and sculptures, has shown himself to be a mature artist of the realistic tendency who confidently copes with his tasks. Also classed in the group of realist artists are the portrait sculptor Mendelevich (busts of Lenin, Buđnov, Tsiurupa and others), Krandievskaya and Zlatovratsky, who in recent years

created a number of expressive portraits of shock-workers.

Korolev, the leader of the "Left" current during the early revolutionary period, subsequently turned to realism, breaking with his cubistic past. Author of a series of imposing monuments (monument to the Revolution in Saratov, monument to Bauman in Moscow, monument to Lenin and monument to Zheliabov, under construction in Leningrad, an expressive and bold portrait), Korolev treats Nature boldly, sweepingly, "pictorially."

Mukhina's talent is characterised above all by a love of form, by interest in its plastic effect. The images she creates are characterised by their grandeur, generalisation, completeness.

The many women sculptors, with Mukhina at their head, should also be mentioned. Lebedeva, a refined, discriminating portrait sculptress, has incarnated in her portrait series the faces of the men of the Revolution.

Amongst the young sculptors are Chaikov, a keen and thoughtful master, and the brilliant decorator, Frikh-Khar.

Prominent among Chaikov's works are : *The Builder*, *The Glider Pilot*, *The Parachute Jumper*, *The Tractor Works*.

Frikh-Khar understands and loves the material with which he works. His talent is inclined towards the primitive, the exotic, hence his interest in Oriental themes and his great success in the domain of decorative art (ceramics).

Mention should be made of some talented sculptors whose characteristics we are unable to give because of lack of space. These are : Rakhmanov, Bulekovsky, Kepinov,

Sherwood, Lavinsky, Babichev, Koltsov.

Turning to the young forces, to those who are going to be the masters of to-morrow, mention should be made of Motovilov, who endeavours to embody, in the language of sculpture, the themes of motion, of purposeful effort (draft of a monument to Chapayev, draft of a monument to the capture of Perekop) ; the refined, original portrait sculptor, Slonim ; the gifted Zelensky, whose solutions are always formally exquisite and finely thought out (*Red Navy Man*, the draft for the monument "To those who fell in Chelyabinsk") ; Balashev, who has as yet not found himself, but who unquestionably possesses great sculptural feeling (the draft for a monument to Shevchenko) ; the gifted Listopad, who is successfully overcoming Burdell's stylistic influence (bas-relief, *A Subbotnik on a Collective Farm*) ; the forcible and rich talent of Kardashev (*Cavalry Attack*) ; Tavasiyev, an artist from the Caucasian gorges, who introduced a current of genuine national originality (*The Head of a Partisan*) into Soviet art, while being at the same time an untiring propagandist for new technical methods of sculpture ; the vigorous and buoyant realistic talents of Schwartz and Valev, who have already revealed themselves in big decorative monument works (*Discobolus* by Schwartz, *Basketball* by Valev) ; a number of promising young portrait-sculptors and monument-sculptors (Grigoryev, Neroda, Shilnikov). With such growing young talents we may look confidently into the future, unafraid of the great and responsible tasks set by history before young Soviet sculpture—to give a true picture of this unique epoch.

P A I N T I N G



COSMA PETROV-VODKIN
Self-Portrait, 1918

In what might be a portrait of Don Quixote, the artist's characteristic rigidity of style is noticeable. He is one of a band of pre-revolutionary artists who have survived the change to Soviet government.



**PETER
KONCHALOVSKY**
Pushkin

ISAAC BRODSKY
Lenin at the
Smolny Institute



Konchalovsky's unconventional portrait of the great Russian poet attracted much attention when first shown. The Smolny Institute in Petrograd was the cradle of the revolution; much is known of Lenin's work there from the memoirs of his colleagues, on which the picture is based.



PAVEL KORIN
Portrait of Maxim Gorky
Tretyakov State Gallery

The greatest living writer of the Soviet was in Italy, recovering from an illness, when this was painted. Cities, factories, streets, theatres, aeroplanes have been named after Gorky.

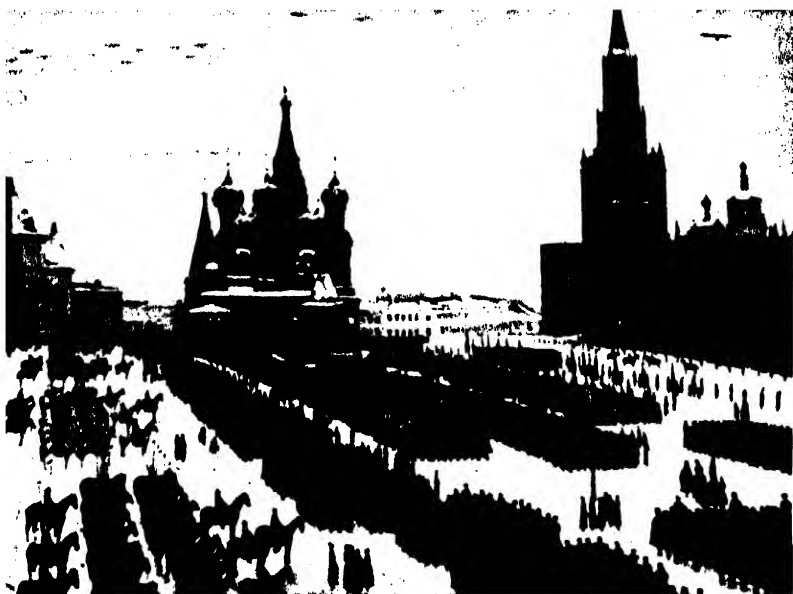


TARRAS GAPONENKO, born 1906, Moscow. "Collective Farm Women Workers going to work," 1933. *Exhibition of the Library*

THE HISTORICAL DRAMA IN PICTURE

Soviet artists find inspiration in scenes which have a bearing upon events of contemporary or recent historical and social interest. The enthusiasm of the collective farm





CONSTANTINE YUON, born 1875,
Moscow. "Parade in the Red
Square," 1930.



SERGE GERASSIMOV, born 1885,
Moscow. "Pledge of the Siberian
Partisans," 1933.
Central Museum of the Red Army.



GEORGE NISSKY, born 1903,
Moscow. "Soviet Fleet in Foreign
Waters," 1933.
Central Museum of the Red Army.



ALEXANDER DEINEKA, born 1899, Moscow. "The Defence of Petrograd," 1927.
Trotsky Collection



COSMA PETROV-VODKIN, born 1878, Leningrad. "Death of a Commissar," 1928.
Trotsky Collection



PETER WILLIAMS. "Marines at Petrograd." Exhibited at the Venice Biennial, 1934.

These spirited pictures, in a great variety of techniques illustrate the military aspect of Soviet activities. In design, the "Parade in the Red Square" and "The Defence of Petrograd" are particularly impressive and well known.

SCENES OF WAR



THEODORE BOGORODSKY, born 1895, Moscow. "Found a Comrade," 1933.
Trotsky Collection



1



2

1. PETER WILLIAMS. "Bathers." Exhibited at the Venice Biennial, 1934. 2. ALEXANDER SAMOKHVALOV, born 1894, Leningrad. "A Russian Girl," 1931-32.



SOVIET TYPES

COSMA PETROV-VODKIN. "Morning," 1918. *Exhibited, State Museum*



3



4

3. ALEXANDER DEINEKA, born 1899, Moscow. "Bathing Girls," 1933. 4. COSMA PETROV-VODKIN, born 1878, Leningrad. "Girl at the Window," 1928. Russian State Museum

THE ACTIVITY OF STURDY AND

The activity of sturdy and athletic womanhood and characteristic female types of the Soviet Union are expressed in this fine series of paintings.



GEORGE RYAZHISKY, Moscow. "Girl on Skis," 1933. Russian State Museum



2

1. **DAVID STERENBERG**
born 1881, Moscow. "The
Agitator," 1927. Tretyakov
State Gallery. 2. **THEODORE**
ANTONOV, born 1904,
Moscow. "Love," 1933.
Tretyakov State Gallery

The Soviet artist is not uninfluenced by the Western tendency of simplification, but a more pronounced



4



3. ALEXANDER SHEVCH-
ENKO, born 1886, Moscow.
"Children of Fishermen,"
1933. 4. ALEXANDER DEIN-
EKA, born 1899, Moscow.
"Mother," 1932. *Indyalev*

interest in subject matter tends to combine breadth to technique with an "idealistic realism.



YURI PIMENOV, born 1903, Moscow.
"A scene in Pavlovsk," from "The
Idiot," by Dostoyevsky, 1933.

The exotic element in the art of a country whose borders spread from the arctic circle to the tropics, finds expression in the barbaric energy, of the scene in Tabriz, in the theatrical mysticism of the Dostoyevsky subject.



ANATOLE PETRITSKY, born 1894,
Ukraine. "Portrait."

CONSTANTINE ISTOMIN, born 1887,
Moscow. "A Girl of Karachai," 1928.
in State Museum



AKOP KODJOYAN, Armenia. "A Chaik-
hane (tea room) in Tabriz."





PAUL RADIMOV, born 1887, Moscow. "People covered with Mats" (an episode from the civil war), 1929. <http://www.museum.ru/en/paul-radimov>

ISAAC BRODSKY, born 1883, Leningrad. "A Winter Landscape," 1917.





VASSILY YAKOVLEV, born 1894, Moscow. "The Landing of the Fishermen." Tretyakov Gallery.

LANDSCAPE

Pictures which convey different moods, a forlorn headland, the wide spreading snow-covered plain, the crowded shore, without pronounced mannerisms of handling.



EUGENE KATZMAN, born 1890, Moscow. "Kalyazin Lacemakers," 1922. Tretyakov State Gallery.

Homely pictures, the above being executed

with a wonderful minuteness of detail.



ILYA MASHKOV, born 1881, Moscow. "Moscow Delicacies," 1924. Tretyakov State Gallery.

SCULPTURE



IVAN SHADR, born
1890, Moscow.
"Cobble-stones, the
Weapons of the Pro-
letariat," 1928.

Soviet realism in sculpture has inspired many
works whose subject is proletarian activity.



NIKOLAI ANDREYEV, 1873-1932,
Moscow. "Lenin Writing," 1920.



NIKOLAI ANDREYEV,
1873-1932, Moscow.
"Head of an Old
Woman."



**BORIS KOROLEV, born 1885,
Moscow. Statue of Tolstoy, 1925.**

A rugged and natural character with more emphasis
on human type than formal qualities is to be seen
in these outstanding works.



**VERA MUKHINA, born 1891,
Moscow. "A Peasant
Woman," 1927, bronze.**

RUSSIAN YOUTH IN SCULPTURE



VALENTINE VALEV, born 1901,
Moscow. "Blast Furnace Worker."

JOSEPH CHAIKO, Moscow.
"Parachute Jumper," 1932-33.





**VLADIMYR DOMOGATSKY, born 1879,
Moscow, "Portrait of the Artist's Son,"
1926, marble. Tretyakovskaya Galerei**

Work, adventure, youth and youthful enthusiasm have a special symbolic significance.

FIGURINES

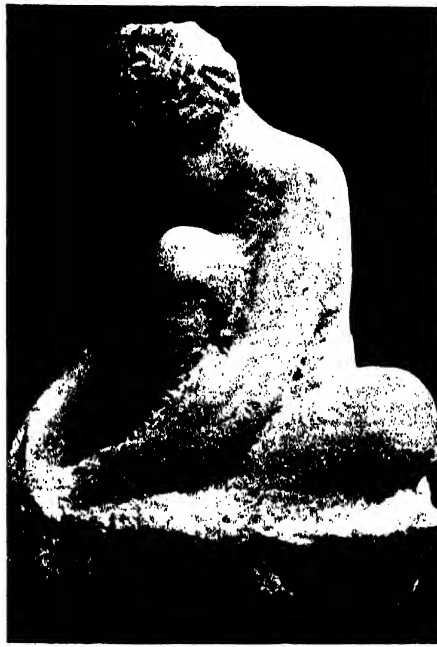


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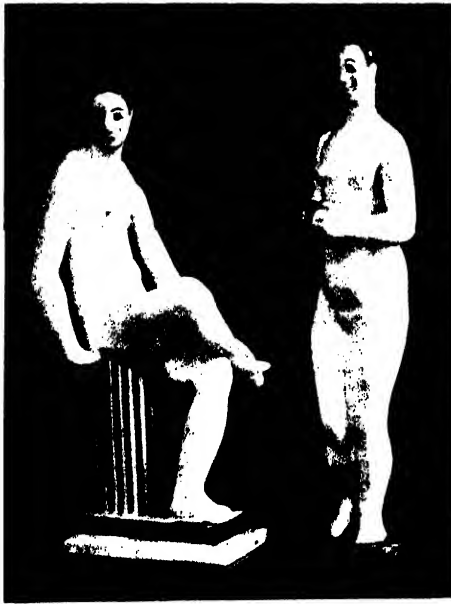
1. VASSILY VATAGIN, born 1883, Moscow. Lion cubs, 1933, wood. 2. IVAN YEFIMOV, born 1878, Moscow. Zebra, 1924, porcelain. Tretyakov State Gallery



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6

3. SARAH LEBEDEVA, born 1895, Moscow. "Etude," 1933, plaster cast. 4. ALEXEI ZELENSKY, born 1903, Moscow. "A Seated Woman," 1930, limestone. Tretyakov State Gallery. 5. ALEXANDER MATVEYEV, Leningrad. Porcelain statuettes, 1928. 6. SARAH LEBEDEVA. "Etude."

1



3



2



4



1. ALEXANDER ZLATOVRSKY, born 1878, Moscow. "The Shock Brigade Worker," 1931. 2. GEORGE NERODA, born 1895, Moscow. "Portrait of Stalin," 1934. 3. BORIS KOROLEV, born 1885, Moscow. "Portrait of Bakunin," 1926, wood. "Descent of the Revolution." 4. SARAH LEBEDEV, born 1895, Moscow. "Portrait of A. Solz," 1931. "Descent of the Revolution."

SOVIET PORTRAIT SCULPTURE

DRAWING & ENGRAVING

By A. CHEGODAYEV, Keeper of Soviet Graphics, Museum of Fine Arts

I.

Graphic art is the youngest of the Soviet arts. Even those of the Soviet graphic artists who are known as the older generation have nearly all developed and matured in the post-revolutionary years.

A break with the past in the domain of graphic art was begun during the stormy years of the civil war by the Soviet poster—by the “Rosta Windows” that were conducted by the revolutionary poet and artist, Vladimir Mayakovsky—and was completed by engravings for books.

Soviet graphic art rapidly found new paths which led it away for ever from the narrow circle of pre-Revolutionary drawing-room graphic art with its elaborate and pretentious trifles.

Soviet engravings and drawings proved but little affected by the rapidly out-lived experiments of the “Left.” Equally slight was the influence exercised on Soviet graphic art by the passive naturalism which replaced the “Lefts” and which gained a hold on Soviet art for a time in the first years of the New Economic Policy; nor was graphic art greatly influenced by the timid attempts at a revival of æsthetical and academic stylisation which took place during the same period. Since that time the basic current in Soviet graphic art has been *realism*, varying in form and in quality, but becoming more and more firmly established in the work of the best Soviet graphic artists.

This realism, which with equal mastery recreates both the images of the past, presented in a new way, and the realities of the Soviet present, the new people and the new scenery, has raised Soviet graphic art to the heights of a world art.

A keen realistic perception of the world, laconic and generalised, taking no interest in non-essential details; expressiveness of the image; an organically new conception of the world—these have become the typical qualities of the leading Soviet graphic artists.

Soviet graphic art, following in the paths of the new Socialist humanism, pays ever greater attention to the depiction of the actual concrete man, both in book engravings and in drawings. The portrait, born of an interest in an individual personality which reflects in itself the general face of the class and of the epoch, has become very popular in Soviet engravings and drawings, as well as in Soviet sculpture.

Wood-engraving, which in the very first works of Favorsky (the illustrations for Anatole France's *Opinions de l'Abbé Coignard*) received its own and independent language that had been lost since the time of A. Dürer and the Japanese, came to the fore in Soviet graphic art.

There emerged the new art of the book. As against the decorative traditions of the stylistic and ornamentalist school of the artists who had been engaged in the decoration of books before the Revolution, Favorsky introduced the new principles of book design in which all the elements—from the cover and the format to the illustrations, lettering and end-pieces—disclose the meaning and the style of the text.

Another type of Soviet book design is associated with the name of Lebedev, who has created a new book for children, based on the language of the poster.

In connection with this “revolution in the book,” it became possible for engraving

to penetrate into new fields—into journals (even those of the textile industry, or of horse-breeding—for instance, the covers engraved by Favorsky), and later into textbooks, political books and scientific literature (illustrations to Stalin's speech on the results of the First Five Year Plan, by Staronosov; illustrations to Shapley's *From Atoms to Galaxies*, by Matorin).

Soviet graphic art owes its development to a considerable extent to the great interest of the toiling masses of the U.S.S.R. in Soviet and classical literature. The demand for illustrations for literary works of all times and all nations is exceedingly great. In this connection mention should be made of the ever-extending activity of the Academia Publishing House which is constantly publishing illustrated editions of the classics—from Homer to Thomas Hardy, from Firdausi to Dickens, from *The Saga of Igor's Company* (an ancient Russian epic) to *Italian Tales*, by Maxim Gorky.

II

Among Soviet graphic artists there are but very few pre-revolutionary artists.

The best work of Ostroumova-Lebedeva since the Revolution is her *Blue Neva* of 1926, which is in line with the previous works of this artist, who has assimilated the best in pre-revolutionary graphic art. Only in the latest works of Ostroumova-Lebedeva has the new Leningrad, so unlike the former Petersburg views depicted by her, been reflected in her work. E. Kruglikova, in her series of etchings of the Baku oilfields, has substantially retained her somewhat loose, impressionistic manner. In the post-revolutionary illustrations of D. Kardovsky the same archeologically precise costumes and angular gestures are repeated.

I. Pavlov, having little changed the technique of his reproductive wood-engraving which repeat the engraving technique of the end of the nineteenth century, turned in his landscapes and portraits to material taken from Soviet life. His portraits of shock-brigade workers and of revolutionary leaders, especially the portrait of Stalin, have gained wide popularity.

To the same group of old-pre-revolutionary masters belong the etcher, M. Dobrov; the learned and strictly academic wood-engraver, P. Shillingovsky; and lastly, the recently deceased sculptor, N. Andreyev, an accomplished academic delineator who

created a most invaluable collection of sketches of Lenin (from life).

Younger successors of the academic and genre naturalist traditions in Soviet graphic art are not numerous, nor are they typical of Soviet graphic art. The most consistent, unpretentiously descriptive naturalist is I. Sokolov, who works almost exclusively in the field of coloured engraving on linoleum. A continuer of the traditions of reproductive wood-engraving is M. Matorin. In this connection the drawings of P. Skala, N. Dormidontov, S. Pavlov and E. Katzman, and of the more impressionistic B. Zenkevich and F. Lekht may also be mentioned. An outstanding feature of this group is the water-colours of that thoughtful painter, G. Ryazhsky.

The group of graphic artists which came from the pre-revolutionary "World of Art" group, has produced greater artists. As against the fairly indifferent and passive description of objects that was characteristic of contemplative naturalism, these artists gave a sharply subjective interpretation of the world.

A number of artists historically associated with this trend have found the way to overcome this essentially limited method. Some of them found the solution in the realm of form, along the path of a clear and brilliant accentuation of that very subjective emotionalism. Thus, the iridescent water-colours of A. Fonvizin, in which everything merges in a glimmer of hues, produce a vivid impression on the beholder despite the subjectiveness of his almost amorphous images. The same deepening and accentuation of the subjective world of images is characteristic of the sketches of M. Sokolov, especially of his illustrations for Dickens and his portraits of the men of the great French Revolution, despite the fact that they are obviously influenced by Guys.

Other artists of this group have more resolutely followed the path which finally leads them to realism.

Thus, I. Nivinsky, one of the most prominent Soviet etchers, after the smartly decorative *Caucasian Capricious* has created great portraits of Lenin and works depicting Soviet construction (*Transcaucasian Hydro-Electric Power Plant, Azerbaijan Oil Fields*, etc.). Nivinsky has made use of the methods of photomontage: the juxtaposition of things occurring in different places at different times. In his departure from the old traditions he was helped a great deal by influences



A. GERASIMOV: A State Cattle-Breeding Farm.

which emanated from what was best in "Left" art. The same influences manifested themselves to a varying extent, and with varying results, upon the three great wood-engravers in this group—A. Kravchenko, N. Piskarev, and A. Suvorov.

A. Kravchenko has travelled along a splendid path which has led him to one of the foremost positions among Soviet graphic artists. An artist with a sharply individual manner, he has put the seal of his brilliant romantic-decorative style upon the most diverse subjects which fell within the circle of his extensive interests. The development of wood-engraving enabled him to develop his grotesque language in the very first series of his illustrations for Holmann, Dickens and Gogol. Later, he became one of the most eminent masters in the silvery play of lines (*Stradivarius in his Workshop*). A romanticist and a lyricist—of the very best type of revolutionary romanticism—he remains the same when embodying new themes (*Dneprostroy*, *Lenin's Mausoleum*, illustration to Sholokhov's *Quiet Don*).

Piskarev, under the influence of the Favorsky school, has entirely rid himself of the ornate and rhetorical symbolism of his earlier works. Grim intensity and gem-like finesse characterise his illustrations to Serafimovich's *The Iron Flood*. In the latest big work of Piskarev—the coloured wood-engravings for *Anna Karenina*—stress is placed on a subtle subjective lyricism at the expense of the dramatic phase of Tolstoy's novel.

Suvorov is an artist who combines the elements of a brightly individual subjective language with a search for profoundly realistic expressiveness. Formerly an adept of an art which was closely allied to expressionism, he has since passed over—in his bright and gay illustrations for A. Tolstoy's *Nikita's Childhood* to the emotional and simple realistic manner.

Closely reminiscent of Kravchenko in some ways is P. Staronossov, who drew the illustrations for *Stalin's Speech at the Sixteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*.

A third group, connected with the traditions that have been completely given up by the leading Soviet graphic artists, comprises "Left" artists who proceed from the expressionistic principles of modern German art. The outstanding members of this group are D. Sterenberg and A. Tischler (the latter drew interesting illustrations for Selvinsky's *Ulalaye'schina*) and the water-colour painter, M. Gorshman.

III.

In recent years we witness the appearance of even more clearly defined groups of artists for whom the realistic element has already become the dominant one. The majority of these artists have passed through the "Left" rationalistic experiments of the first years of the Revolution—experiments which they subsequently utilised for the purpose of a clear and thoughtful depiction of reality.

Here we must dwell on the following currents: in the first place, the art of P. Miturich, P. Lvov, N. Tyrsa and G. Vereisky (in the latter, however, traces of passive contemplativeness are still to be found). The irreproachably accurate realism of Miturich, who possesses perhaps the most ideal perceptive apparatus in Soviet graphic art, suggests the thought that Miturich, having passed over to such precise realistic form after sharp "Left" experiments, was afraid to make a further step, to subordinate his knowledge of the external reality to a deeper appraisal thereof. The same somewhat restrained contemplativeness characterises the water-colours of Tyrsa, a remarkable animal-painter, and the drawings of Lvov who stands close to Miturich, but is even more gentle and lyrical. In the drawings and lithographs of Vereisky, one is struck by the fluctuation between the academic immobility of some of his works and the sparkling, vivid and greatly generalised realistic craftsmanship of his other works (for instance, his remarkable *Portrait of Artist's Mother*). The refined water-colour painter, A. Moguilevsky, stands close to this group.

This contemplativeness and passiveness has been fully overcome in the works of a remarkable group of realistic graphic artists headed by M. Rodionov and S. Gerassimov—the latter one of the most prominent Soviet oil-painters, who works with equal success in the domain of graphic art. S. Gerassimov's illustrations for Nekrassov's poem, *Who is Happy in Russia?* have been executed with exceptional brilliance, and are full of profound social characterisations. The refined and placid landscape painter, Rodinov, is becoming one of the most remarkable Soviet artists in realistic drawing. Of especial interest are his most recent works, *Novgorod Landscapes*.

The ranks of this group have been replenished by two interesting, and still very young graphic artists, D. Shmarinov

and B. Dekhterev, who have come to the fore by their illustrations for the works of Maxim Gorky.

A connecting link between this group and the Favorsky-Lebedev circle is P. Pavlinov, one of the principal Soviet engravers, whose craftsmanship is excellent and profound, the creator of the synthetical, psychological portrait in Soviet engraving (*Pushkin, Tyutchev*). At the same time he works as a keen, although somewhat rationalistic illustrator (woodcuts to Ruffini's *Lorenzo Benoni*).

The work of the Leningrad artist, N. Brimmer, who died young, an excellent engraver, developed under the influence of Pavlinov.

However, most of the younger artists group themselves around V. Favorsky, V. Lebedev and N. Kupreyanov.

Lebedev is one of the most brilliant Soviet artists. Having overcome the cubism and suprematism of his earlier works, he has arrived at a vivid and sensuous, although somewhat frigid and considered realism. In his ironical series of social drawings (from *The Streets of the Revolution* to *N.E.P.*) and in his amazing water-colours (*Sportswomen with Floeers*) is seen the same rapid emancipation from abstract design which is also true of his books for children from *The Circus* and *The Hunt* to *Petrushka*. In his drawings of artist's models, one is impressed by the conciseness of his lines which are at the same time precise and to the point. The features of Lebedev's realistic art, which is sensuous and far removed from naturalism, have been communicated to the best of his pupils, V. Kurdov. The latest book illustrated by him, dealing with the life of the Chukchas (*The Life of Imteurgin Senior*) is one of the best books published in recent years. Of the other pupils of Lebedev, mention should be made of the graphic artists A. Pakhomov and V. Charushin, and the engravers S. Mochalov and E. Budogosky.

A master not inferior to Lebedev in regard to talent is the most lyrical of all the Soviet artists, N. Kupreyanov (who met his death by drowning in 1933). Just as Lebedev, he had broken with the "Left" quests and had turned to the study of actual life. His road from the emotional engraving of the earlier period (*The Cruiser "Aurora"*) to the profoundly lyrical series of *Herd*s, *Rail-road*, *Fisheries* and *Baltic Fleet*, was one of profound quests which yielded a multitude of beautiful drawings and water-colours. Kupreyanov is in his turn surrounded by a

galaxy of followers, among whom first place is held by the remarkable trio of graphic artists, painters and cartoonists working jointly under the collective *nom de plume* of "Kukryniksy," from the first syllables of M. Kupriyanov, P. Krylov, and Nikolai Sokolov. Their principal work is a series of vividly expressive illustrations for Gorky's *The Life of Klim Samgin*.

L. Bruni is close to both Kupreyanov and Lebedev. This most refined and delicate lyricist has not accidentally devoted most of his work to children and animals, being perhaps the keenest and closest observer of reality, which he reflects by means of sparing pencil lines or by means of bright yet precise water-colours.

Beside him mention should be made of N. Altman, who, like Bruni and Lebedev, has traversed the road through subjectless abstractions to accurate realistic observations. In his illustrations (for Gogol) there is much grotesque expressiveness which can be traced to Jewish graphic art, yet they are clear and intelligible, revealing the realist. Soviet graphic art is indebted to him for his series of remarkable sketches of Lenin.

However, the most outstanding and the greatest name in Soviet graphic art is that of the eminent Soviet artist V. Favorsky. One thinks of him perhaps more than of anyone else when one speaks of the new humanism which is capable of hating all the rotten survivals of the old world (like the White Guard officer in his illustrations to Spassky's *New Year's Eve*), but which also profoundly and attentively appraises everything that is best in human nature.

Favorsky in his work is interested in the man. The landscape and the genre participate in his works only in the capacity of assistants in the characterisation of people. And such of his works as the new portraits created by him of the actress Babanova in the rôle of a boy who becomes a hero, or the people in his remarkable composition *Blukher and the Far Eastern Army* (a pencil drawing), belong to the very best works of Soviet art.

A lengthy process of emancipation may be traced along the entire course of his illustrations from Globa's *Thamar* and *Ruth* to Prishvin's *Cheng-Sheng* and in his portraits (from *Istomin* to *Dostoyevsky* or *Dante*). His frescoes and scenic designs (for Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*) indicate how multiform is his work.

The large group of immediate pupils of

Favorsky is composed of artists of various talents and various trends, and of various degrees of dependence on their master. The most brilliant and original first-rate artists are the trio: A. Deineka, A. Goncharov, and G. Pimenov. Deineka is a great painter, poster and graphic artist, and one of the best known and most popular Soviet artists. He has organically assimilated the Favorsky method and has created upon its basis his own brilliant and socially keen art in which, too, the foreground is held by man, and above all, by the new man created by the Revolution.

In the last two years Goncharov has become a great master of engraving and book illustration. At the same time he is an incisive painter and scenic designer. It was particularly difficult for him to overcome not only a rationalistic dryness and abstractness, but also strong elements of expressionistic distortion. All the more brilliant was his work after his emancipation from these defects. Thus, for example, his illustrations to Smollett offer a most fascinating interpretation of the text and are replete with inexhaustible humour and freshness. Such works as *Fifteen Years of the Red Army* are of the monumental type of Soviet graphic work despite the small size of the engraving. Pimenov, equally trenchant and expressionistic has arrived in his latest paintings and drawings at a sharp yet quite simple and realistic manner. His most important book illustrations are a series of large water-colours for Dostoyevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*.

A particularly great number of Favorsky's followers are working on book illustration. Such artists as G. Yechestov (excellent portraits of the artists Prud'hon, Gericault, etc.), M. Pikov (the actress Babanova), I. Mulhaupt (*Odyssey*), G. Tuganov, M. Polyakov, A. Kravtsov and B. Grozevsky have long since won prominent places among Soviet engravers.

This abundance of excellent young artists convinces one that the Soviet graphic art is on the right road, leading to the greatest heights of world art.

IV.

So far we have dealt with the graphic art of Moscow and Leningrad. But beside Moscow and Leningrad graphic art has appeared and is successfully developing in the Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia, White-Russia, Uzbekistan and the other republics of the Soviet Union. The elements of the respective national artistic cultures form an important component part of the graphic art style of each of these nationalities. The best representatives of these national currents in graphic art have followed the same course -- from the conversion and critical selection of the old traditions to the profound realism of Soviet art, to the method of socialist realism. Certain artists, it is true, such as the Ukrainians Padalka and Sedlyar, or the Georgian Gudishvili, are still devoting too much attention to the ornamental decorative and schematic methods of the old national art. Yet, for the majority of the national artists the old traditions proved but a fruitful starting point (as for such prominent graphic artists as A. Kodjoyan in Armenia, for the Jewish-Ukrainian engravers, Fradkin and Blank; for the Jewish White-Russian engraver, Yudovin, and so on).

Ukrainian engraving has provided the greatest number of prominent artists, among whom mention should be made of Padalka, Dovgal, Sakhnovskaya and of the versatile artist V. Kassian, in whose work the traditions of the old Ukrainian masters are interwoven with those of both classical and modern European graphic art.

Kassian arrived in the U.S.S.R. in 1927 and entered the ranks of Soviet painters. The romantic pathos of the Civil War to which his first Soviet engravings are devoted (*The Taking of Perekop*), is replaced by the pathos of socialist construction. In a large number of engravings devoted to Dneprostroy, Kassian has found a more calm and realistic method of presentation.

Following the Ukrainian school begins the rapid growth of other national schools of graphic art, striving to keep up with the high standard already set by the artists of Moscow and Leningrad.

POSTER AND CARTOON ART

By BORIS PERSOV

The poster artists of the U.S.S.R. may justly be called the historic vanguard of our pictorial art. For this group of artists was really the first to take up militant front positions, in the true sense of these words, during the civil war period of 1918-20.

The art history of the October Revolution begins with the poster. Consonant with the battle songs of Demyan Byedni—sung in the trenches and on the armoured trains—were the stern invectives of the artists, Deni, Malyutin and Moor, which were distributed in thousands of sheets throughout the country. Vladimir Mayakovsky joined the ranks of these militant artists, creating posters of great satirical force in addition to his poems. It was not accidental that during this period the headquarters of this militant art were the offices of the Russian Telegraph Agency—*Rosta*—which has organised the famous “Rosta Windows” displaying political posters that reacted to events with telegraphic rapidity.

One of the first problems which the Soviet artists faced consisted simply in overcoming the alien methods of the old poster, which had served the purposes of commercial and cinematographic advertising. The unsuitability of those methods was patent. This was most clearly demonstrated by the unsuccessful experiments of the artist Apsit (a subsequent *émigré*), who tried to adapt the traditional symbolism and advertising tricks used in the pre-Revolutionary poster to meet the requirements of the Soviet poster. As an example it is sufficient to mention the “First of May” poster by Apsit, in which the Revolution is depicted as a fairy showering flowers upon a May-Day demonstration of Soviet proletarians. No more convincing was another poster by the same artist,

entitled *Capital*, a dragon-like monster (Capital) with a crowd of emaciated people, supposedly representing the proletariat, at his feet.

As a basis for their work the Soviet artists accepted the need for a new theme in poster work, for new images, and for a corresponding new means of expression.

The issuing of posters was taken over by the Revolutionary War Council. With the help of that body, amid an atmosphere of constant military alarms, a new poster was created: posters on concrete topics of the day, posters directed against the enemies of the Revolution and appealing for the unity of all forces for the defence of the new Soviet State.

The above-mentioned “Rosta Windows” may serve as an example of the satirical style of poster. As a rule these “windows” showed a series of pictures printed on a single sheet and following each other in succession, forming a connected story. The basic feature of these satirical panoramas lay in the sharp contrasting of the images and in the pointedness of the story, which invariably had a powerful and convincing conclusion calling for action. On these sheets, Soviet poster types, in which every worker could easily recognise his friends and enemies, emerged for the first time. The splendid verses of the texts, by Demyan Byedny, Vladimir Mayakovsky and other poets, gave brief aphoristic explanations of the pictures.

It is difficult to imagine the Moscow or Petrograd of 1919-20 without those “satire windows,” brightly illuminated till the early hours of the morning and attracting large throngs of spectators. The “Rosta Windows” constituted a remarkable supplement to the exhortations of the leaders, which were

posted on the walls near-by, to the appeals of the Party, and to the telegraphic news bulletins from the battle-fronts of the civil war.

It is interesting to note that recently (beginning with 1931) there has been a revival of the "Rosta Windows," in the form of "poster newspapers" issued in great quantities.

An example of the style of the heroic poster of that period is given in the well-known poster by Moor. "Have you Enlisted as a Volunteer?" There is exceptional power of conviction in the gaze of the Red-Army man depicted on the poster, in the gesture of his outstretched arm, imperiously pointed at the spectator. Moor likes to focus attention on some central "spot" of the poster in which its entire appeal is embodied. Quite different is the manner in which Deni executes his posters. His is the illustrative and narrative style. In a few vividly drawn figures, with brief and terse inscriptions forming part of the picture, Deni manages to characterise the most intricate situation, exposing its real political significance. Such, for instance, is his *Kolchak*. The figures of Kolchak and his associates, and the accessories of the poster, clearly tell the story as to what social forces were represented by the counter-revolution, and what their victory would have meant for the toilers.

Beside Deni, Moor and Mayakovsky, the brigade of the Rosta artists was joined by Cherenikh, Lebedev, Malyutin and others.

We owe a great deal to Cherenikh for his creation of the Soviet "poster types." He manages, without falling into schematism, to give laconic and at the same time exceedingly life-like images.

With the death of Ivan Malyuzin, Soviet art lost not only a remarkable poster artist and social satirist, but also a prominent decorator and painter.

The transition to peaceful construction, to great creative work in all the spheres of economic and cultural life, raised immensely complex problems before Soviet poster art.

Tremendous vistas opened before the country, but there were also tremendous difficulties. The ruined economy had to be restored upon a new foundation in order to proceed to the broad regeneration of the Socialist economy and the new culture.

In place of the heroes of the civil war there came the heroism of labour. In the enemy camp, in place of the armed generals, there came the wrecker, the class enemy, who attempted to wreck the young Socialist construction by attacking from within.

Illustrated publications and newspapers became veritable laboratories for mass art. Alongside the older masters, newspaper and magazine illustration produced a number of young artists including such an outstanding artist as Deineka. A new stage ensued in the history of Soviet poster art, which led to a great success in late years.

Deineka's poster on the mastery of technique (*We Must Become Specialists Ourselves!*) was the first great triumph in the creation of the new poster types.

In his poster on the Proletarian Dictatorship, another talented artist, Kanevsky, has succeeded in creating the image of the old revolutionary worker, powerful in its realism and restrained energy.

Senkin has produced a poster dedicated to Soviet womanhood and popularising the idea of beautifying the factory workshops with plants and flowers.

Koretzky deals with the theme of international solidarity in the poster having for its title the first words of the chorus of "The International" (" 'Tis the final conflict, let each stand in his place! ")

We mention these merely as examples. In recent years a number of posters of considerable artistic merit have been created. Such are Deni's *Make Way for the World's October!* Cherenikh's poster on the indispensibility of motors, and a number of posters by talented young artists like the Stenbergs, Prusakov, Lyushin and others.

An important place in poster art is occupied by *photomontage*. Kluzius, Senkin, Yelkin, and a number of young artists, including Dolgoroukov and Lyubimov, are active in this field.

The style of the Soviet poster has a number of peculiarities on which it is necessary to dwell in order to understand the originality of poster art in the U.S.S.R.

In the Soviet poster depicting our great industrial construction, considerable space is occupied by the *thing* (the machine, technical construction, etc.). Nevertheless, in the best posters we never find that the artists worship the thing. The composition of the poster is always subordinated to a single image, rich in ideological content. The true hero of the Soviet poster is the new man who is creating the new culture in the broadest sense of the term.

In the Soviet poster which endeavours to reproduce the processes of social life in all their manifestations, the figure is organically connected with the entire background and detail of the poster. The very selection of

these details is subordinated to this unified plan.

The laconic style of the Soviet poster is another peculiar feature.

Thus, Deineka in his poster dedicated to the building of Soviet dirigibles made it his purpose to convey in full the idea of the boundless territory of the Soviet Union over which the new powerful dirigibles are to fly. Deineka attains this by depicting on the horizon a small locomotive, scarcely visible in the distance.

Characteristic of the Soviet poster is also the increasing importance of the figure itself.

* * *

The satiric origin of the Soviet poster, which developed from the "Rosta Windows," has closely allied it to the cartoon. It is not surprising that our leading cartoonists have come from the ranks of the poster artists. The names of Moor, Deni, Cheremnikh and many others frequently occur in *Pravda*, *Izvestia*, the oldest Soviet satirical magazine *Krokodil*, and in the journals *Bezbozhnik*, *Smekhnach*, *Chudak*, *Krasny Peretz*, etc. Their cartoons are frequently reproduced in foreign publications.

Beside Yefimov, mention should be made of Rose, who has created a number of cartoons on international subjects.

A number of Soviet cartoonists have come to us from the pre-revolutionary satirical journal *Satirikon*; such are Radakov, Antonovsky, Radlov, and others.

Others to be mentioned are Kozlinsky; Brodaty, who in his best works has a really laconic style; the cartoonist, K. Rotov, who is invariably amusing; Hanf, who while yielding to Rotov in ingenuity, is richer than the latter as regards content; and Klinch, who has created his own style in the realm of photographic caricature.

Our very youngest cartoon artists are Kanevsky and the artists Kuprianov, Krylov and Nikolai Sokolov—the "Kukryniksy."

Between Kanevsky and the "Kukryniksy" there is much in common despite considerable creative divergence. Common to both is, first of all, their use of hyperbole. In their drawings everything is exaggerated, invariably with a definite significance, not only to render ridiculous, but also to characterise.

The "Kukryniksy" endeavour to combine the oldest, the so to speak "age-old"

traditions of world cartooning, with the acuteness that is typical of the art of the Soviet cartoonist.

Kanevsky inclines towards new means of expression. He endeavours to place the object in unusual, at times even fantastic conditions, in order to bring out in sharper relief the basic significance of the cartoon.

Close to the "Kukryniksy" in their style of work are the young artists, Yevgan, Prorokov, Mazrukha, Vasiliev and Soifertis, who work equally successfully in the fields of social and political cartooning.

* * *

In 1933 Soviet poster artists and cartoonists appeared before Soviet spectators in an exhibition dedicated to the fifteenth anniversary of their creative work. We saw before us a gallery of works testifying to the creation of an entirely new art in posters and cartoons. This new art could also be seen in numerous art editions and albums containing the best posters and cartoons of the Soviet masters. Such were, for instance, the albums of cartoons by Deni, the "Kukryniksy," Boris Yefimov, Moor, the Collection of Poster Graphics, etc.

The poster has considerably extended its sphere of penetration in recent years. There has been an enormous increase in the number of the instructive posters, of the posters devoted to the technique of safety in industrial enterprises. The political poster itself has been divided. Besides posters of general declarations, of slogans, so to speak, the art of the narrative poster has emerged and developed.

Concreteness and closest connection with the everyday practice of Socialist construction have always been the characteristic features of the Soviet poster. At the present time these features are especially important. The poster should not only agitate, but should also teach. The boundary is being obliterated between the general political and the instructive poster. The poster is finding its way into all forms of exhibition activity. More than ever before the poster participates now in the external decoration of the city and of the collectivised village.

The latest posters dedicated to themes of agricultural collectivisation and to the struggle for general culture reveal the considerable successes attained by the Soviet artists as the result of their concrete study of Soviet realities.

DRAWING & ENGRAVING



Illustration by E. CHARUSHIN to
Nina Smirnova's "How Mishka
stayed with the Big Bear."

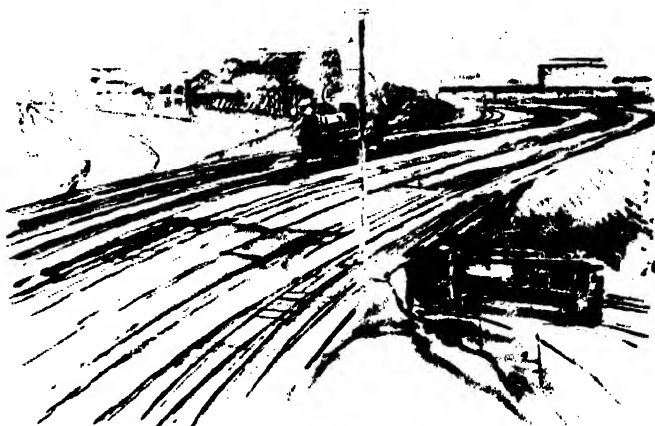
A spirited brush drawing in which simplification is combined with truth to nature.



SERGE GERASIMOV, born 1881, Moscow. Illustration to Nekrasov's poem "Who is Happy in Russia?" 1933. (The artist died in 1933, and this illustration was completed shortly before his death.)

Soviet critics themselves consider that particularly great advances have been made in the field of graphic art since the Revolution owing to the directness and spontaneity of the medium. These are examples of their brush and pencil technique.

BRUSH AND PENCIL



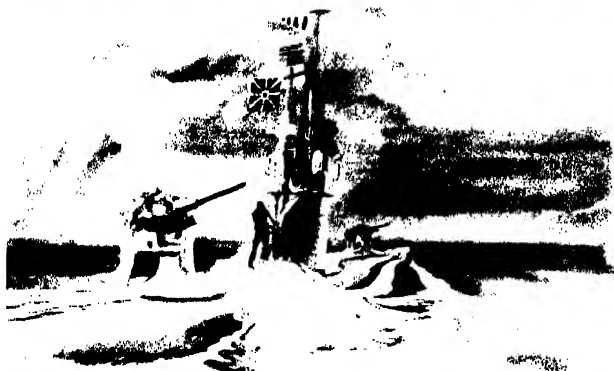
NIKOLAI KUPREYANOV, 1894-1933, Moscow. "Rail Road," 1927, India ink.



MICHAEL KUPRIYANOV (of the Kuk-riniksy), born 1903, Moscow. "Natalka," 1932, India ink. *Exhibition of the USSR Ministry of Culture, Moscow, 1933.*



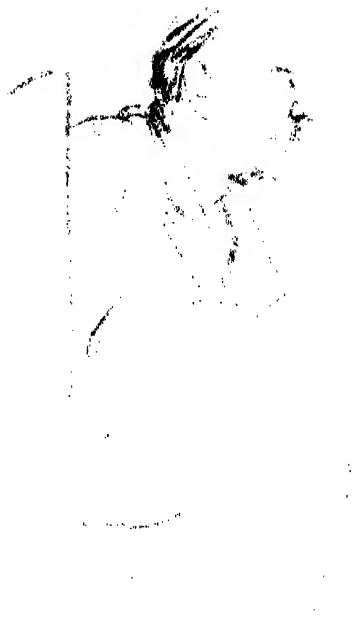
MICHAEL RODIONOV, born 1885, Mos-cow. "Fields," 1927, India ink. *Exhibition of the USSR Ministry of Culture, Moscow, 1933.*



NIKOLAI KUPREYANOV, 1894-1933, Moscow. "Submarine," water colour. *Exhibition of the USSR Ministry of Culture, Moscow, 1933.*



SERGE GERASSIMOV, born 1885, Moscow. "Communists Arrive in a Village," 1927, water colour. *Exhibition of the USSR Ministry of Culture, Moscow, 1933.*



NATHAN ALTMAN, born 1889, Moscow – Paris. "Lenin,"
sketched from life, 1920, pencil.



NIKOLAI TYRSA, born 1887, Leningrad. "Portrait,"
1928, brush drawing. (Leningrad State Gallery.)



LEO BRUNI, born 1894, Moscow.
"Winter," water colour, 1927.

There is a great variety of techniques amongst the graphic artists, and there is no uniformity either in



ARTHUR FONVISIN, born 1883, Moscow.
 "Dancing Girl," water colour, 1933.

style or outlook, though there is
 little experiment of the West
 European modernist kind.



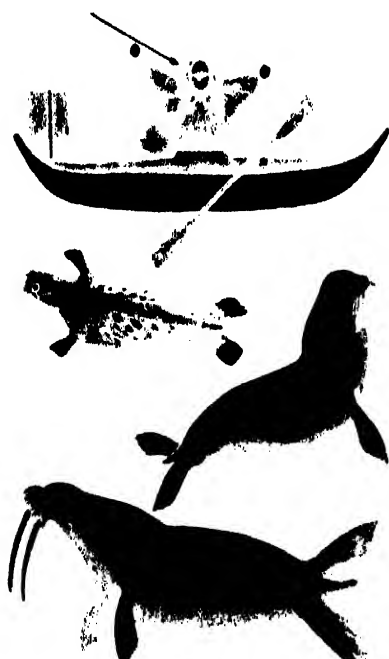
VLADIMIR KONASHEVITCH, born 1888, Leningrad.
 "Portrait of his Daughter," 1929, water colour.
 Courtesy of the artist.



GEORGE VEREISKY, born 1886, Leningrad. "Por-
 trait of his Mother," 1930, water colour. Courtesy



VLADIMIR LEBEDEV, born 1891, Leningrad. Page from children's book, "The Hunt," 1924, lithograph.



VALENTINE KURDOV, born 1905, Leningrad. Illustration to Teki Odulok's "Life of Imteurgin Senior," The Wolf Hunt. Lithograph, 1933-4.



LADO GUDIASHVILI.
Tiflis. Illustration to
"Panther Skin," by
Rustaveli.

The illustrations by Lebedev and Kurdov show a very interesting style of treatment which has been used with great success in book illustration, whilst above is a reminder that traditional decorative modes are not forgotten.



1



2



3



4

1. VLADIMIR KONASHEVICH, born 1888, Leningrad. Illustrations for *Manon Lescaut* by Abbé Prévost, 1931, lithograph. 2. MICHAEL PIKOV, born 1903, Moscow. The actress Babanova in "A Profitable Place," by Ostrovsky, 1933, wood-cut. 3. EDWARD BUDOGOSKY, born 1903, Leningrad. Portrait of the poet Venevitinov, 1933, wood-cut. 4. VLADIMIR FAVORSKY, born 1886, Moscow. Illustration for "Les âmes de Purgatoire," by MÉRIMÉE, 1927, woodcut. 5. ANDREY GONCHAROV, born 1903, Moscow. "Fifteen Years of the Red Army" (cover for Exhibition Catalogue), 1933,

WOOD - ENGRAVING AND



9



4



5



6

coloured wood-cut. 6. SERGE MOCHALOV, born 1902, Leningrad. Illustration to "The House of the Merry Beggars," by Belykh, 1933, wood-cut. 7. VLADIMIR FAVORSKY, born 1886, Moscow. Lettering for "Opinions of Abbé Coignard" by Anatole France, 1918, wood-cut. 8. PAVEL PAVLINOV, born 1881, Moscow. Illustration to "Notes of Lorenzo Benoni," by Ruffini, 1928, wood-cut. 9. ANATOLE SUVOROV, born 1890, Moscow. "Lenin's Arrival in Petrograd in 1917," 1934, wood-cut. 10. PETER STARONOSOV, born 1893, Moscow. "Harvest," 1928, engraving on linoleum.

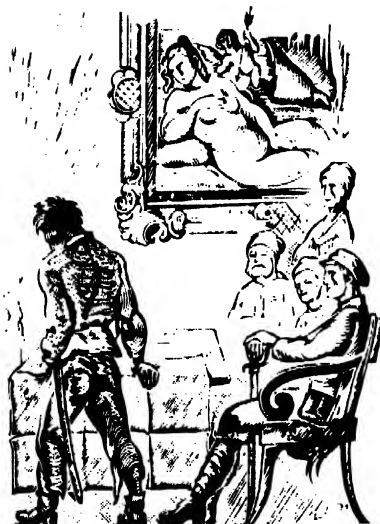
ILLUSTRATION



8



10



1 & 2

1 & 2. NIKOLAI PISKAREV, born 1892, Moscow. Illustrations for "The Iron Flood," by Serafimovich, 1927, wood-cut. 3. ALEXEY KRAVCHENKO, born 1889, Moscow. Illustration for "The Crime of Sylvestre Bonnard," by Anatole France, 1931, wood-cut. 4. ANDREY GONCHAROV, born 1903, Moscow. Illustration to Smollett's "Peregrine Pickle," 1934, woodcut.

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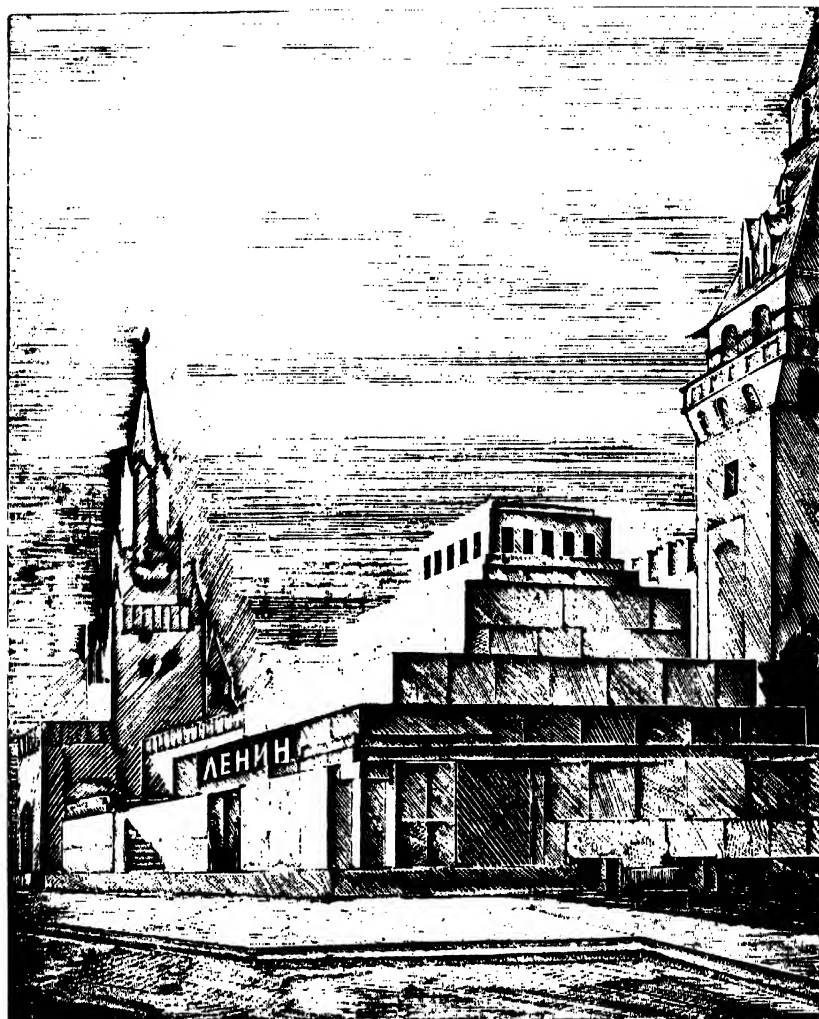
5. ANDREY GONCHAROV, born 1903, Moscow. Illustration for "Wild People," stories by Vsevolod Ivanov, 1933, wood-cut. 6. VLADIMIR FAVORSKY, born 1886, Moscow. "The Actress Babanova in the role of a Boy" (Moscow Theatre of the Revolution), 1933, wood-cut. 7. GEORGE YECHISTOV, born 1897, Moscow. "Portrait of the Artist Prudhon," 1933, wood-cut.

6



7





ALEXEY KRAVCHENKO, born 1889, Moscow. "Lenin Mausoleum," 1933, wood-cut.



ALEXEY KRAVCHENKO "Dnieprostroy" 1931, wood-cut.



Moscow. **ALEXEY KRAVCHENKO**, born 1889, Moscow.
 "Stradivarius in his Workshop," 1927, wood-cut.

Moscow. **NATHAN ALTMAN**, born 1889, Moscow Paris.
 Illustration to Gogol's story "The Nose," 1930. India ink.





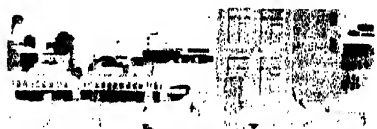
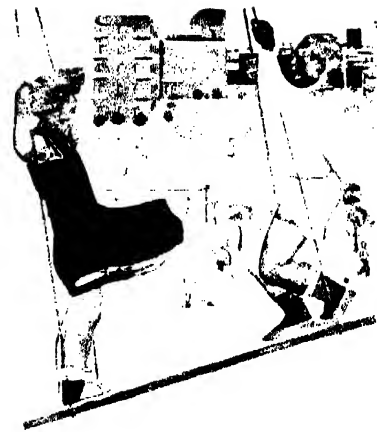
УСПЕХИ КОЛЛЕКТИВИЗАЦИИ
ТОРЖЕСТВО
УЧЕНИЯ
ЛЕНИНА И
СТАЛИНА



3 МОЛОДЕЖЬ НА СВОБОДЕ

1. A. DEINEKA, "Ready for Labour and Defence," 1934.
2. A. ALFEROV and A. SOKOLOV, " Successes of Collectivisation," 1934.
3. G. KLUTSES, " Youth in Airplanes !" 1934.

The new Soviet posters are mostly constructive in character and concerned with the larger problems of internal reorganization.



МЫ РАСТЕМ ПОД ЗНАМЕНЕМ
ЛЕНИНА. СТАЛИНА



4. A. KOKAREKIN, " Children's Playground," 1934.
5. K. ZOTOV, " Under the Banner of Lenin," 1934.
6. V. GOVORKOV, " Your Lamp, Comrade Engineer !" 1933.



7



8

POSTER & CARTOON



9



10



11

KUKRYNIKS. "Face of the Enemy," 1932. 7. "General Denikin." 8. "General Yudenich." 9. "General Annenkov." 10. CHEREMNIKH. From the album "Towards the Prosperous Life." "Before," 1933. 11. CHEREMNIKH. "October, 1917," 1933.



1



2

1. J. HANS. "Salvation by War."

2. KUKRYNIKS, "15 Years of October," 1932.



3. K. URBETIS, Window for 15th Anniversary of Red Army, 1933.
4. P. YEFIMOV. "The Captain of the Land of Soviets."



THEATRE

By J. M. NIKONOV

I.

The theatre as it was in former Tsarist Russia has undergone a number of profound changes and has developed enormously during the period of the existence of Soviet rule.

The art of the theatre has become a mass art embracing large masses of the population which previously had had almost no contact with the theatre.

This penetration of the theatre into the cultural life of the country is clearly demonstrated by the great increase in the number of theatrical troupes and of permanently located theatres. In place of the 154 permanently located theatres which existed in Russia in 1914, at the present time there are about 600. In addition it is necessary to bear in mind that in the Soviet Union, besides the permanently located theatres there are now the so-called travelling theatres which serve principally the Soviet villages. Furthermore, a whole network of non-professional, amateur theatres has developed throughout the country, in towns and collective farms.

Properly speaking, there is no permanent boundary line between these various forms of theatrical organisations. The travelling theatres frequently become permanently located, settling in towns, and recently in the villages also, most frequently under the auspices of the Political Departments of the Machine and Tractor Stations. Likewise, many amateur theatres become professional.

There has been an even greater increase in the number of actors. Whereas in Tsarist Russia, on the eve of the World War, there were 4,900 actors who, moreover, did not work the whole year round, there are now in the Soviet Union about 50,000 actors. Yet even this greatly increased army of actors far from fully satisfies the great demand for theatrical workers in this country. The Soviet theatrical schools are attended by

25,000 young students who, in the next two or three years, will replenish the ranks of the Soviet actors.

Finally, the theatre of Tsarist Russia was primarily a Russian theatre. The theatres of other nationalities inhabiting the former Russian Empire, which have now joined the fraternal Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, led but a miserable existence before the October Revolution. The majority of the peoples in the Russian Empire had no theatres whatever, and the theatrical art of those peoples that had their own theatres was of merely local significance.

The Soviet theatre, on the contrary, embraces numerous peoples and various languages. Performances are given by Soviet theatres in fifty different languages, and theatres like the Berezil Theatre of the Ukraine, the Rustaveli Theatre of Georgia, and the Jewish State Theatre occupy a leading place among those of the Soviet Union.

Corresponding to this numerical growth bound up with the general rise in the cultural level of the peoples of the U.S.S.R., there has been a profound change in the whole character of the Soviet theatre. This change begins with the new playgoer and the new performer and ends with the new Soviet repertoire, the radically new approach to the classical repertoire, the new stage settings and the new style of the entire Soviet theatrical art - the style of Socialist realism.

In what do the peculiar features of all this novelty lie?

Unless we find the common key to all the problems enumerated above, we cannot hope to grasp the peculiar features of the Soviet theatre. The Soviet theatre is the theatre of the October Revolution, which either gave birth to it or recreated it. The Soviet theatre openly states its purpose, to serve the cause of Socialism. And this statement is made not only by the theatrical

publicists, but by the living voice of the theatre itself—by the playwrights, managers, actors, and *above all, by their very art*. The Soviet theatre was faced with definite political tasks which have determined the form of Soviet theatrical art. The Soviet theatre endeavours to give a truthful, concrete, historical portrayal of the realities of revolutionary development, to educate the playgoer in the spirit of the Socialist Revolution, to give a critical appraisal of the past and present from the point of view of the toiling masses who are building Socialism. The method upon which such art is based has become known among workers in the field of Soviet art as the method of Socialist realism.

II.

Soviet theatrical art, following such a trend, is naturally not indifferent as regards its content, its repertoire. By the very character of its tasks the Soviet theatre relies on a great development of Soviet dramaturgy, since the latter puts before the theatre the problem of re-creating Soviet reality, the epoch of Socialist construction, on the stage.

Soviet dramaturgy has passed through a great and complicated process of change in form. From the agitational plays of the times of the Civil War, which dealt with only two colours—red and white (the symbolical colours of revolution and counter-revolution)—Soviet dramaturgy has proceeded to reveal the complex psychology of the new heroes of the Soviet land, to portray the processes of the remoulding of the various strata of Soviet society—of workers, collective farmers, scientists, and even of law breakers who are re-educated by the great process of Socialist construction. This last theme is the theme of the new play by N. Pogodin.

Pogodin depicts the remoulding of the psychology of the people who work on the construction of the White Sea-Baltic Canal. His play will be produced this season at the Krasnaya Presnia Theatre in Moscow, under the direction of N. Okhlopkov.

The creation of a new hero, the hero of Socialist construction, such has been the aim of Soviet dramaturgy. To the creation of this type new features are continuously being added.

A change in the type of hero has invariably accompanied the realignment of class forces. The heroes of the middle-class drama ousted from the stage the heroes of the pseudo-classical tragedies and the medieval miracle plays. The heroes of Ostrovsky who

held the stage for so many years were replaced by the heroes of Chekhov. But never was the change in the type of hero so radical as it is in contemporary Soviet dramaturgy. And this is quite natural. Human society has never experienced such a radical reconstruction, has never known a revolution which has destroyed the very foundations of the old society—its division into classes.

The quest for new heroes created by Socialist construction proved by no means an easy task, although life produces such heroes in hundreds and in thousands. Therefore, at the outset Soviet playwrights preferred to portray the negative figures of Soviet life; not the new but the old “heroes” who found themselves in the new environment, “heroes” who had not been reformed by the Revolution, but who had either adapted themselves to it or had been crushed by it. Consequently, in the plays of the Soviet playwrights the class enemy who has wormed his way into the Soviet camp under the mask of a loyal specialist became for a time a necessary part. Examples of this type of play are Faiko's *The Man with the Briefcase*, which evoked much comment at the time, Afinogenov's *Fear*, and the excellent comedy-satire of the late poet Vladimir Mayakovsky, *The Bedbug*, which was staged by Meyerhold.

Soon, however, the procession of the genuine heroes of the new Soviet life began. Bill-Belotzerkovsky's *Storm* introduced the Soviet spectator to the types of Communists who work in the outlying districts of the Soviet State.

In Trenev's play, *Lyubov Ivanovna*, the figure of the intellectual woman school teacher, who has joined the ranks of the Revolution, is drawn. L. Nikulin, in *Engineer Mertz*, has shown the remoulding of Soviet engineers under the influence of the tremendous tasks and achievements of Socialist construction.

At the same time, it is true, the subject of the intelligentsia was also treated from a different angle, from the viewpoint of its tragic complexity. U. Olesha created a number of figures of heroes—intellectuals who had failed to clear the last barrier which separated them from the Revolution, whose grandeur they felt and perceived (*The Conspiracy of Senses, A List of Benefactions*).

Besides these currents in Soviet dramaturgy, the Soviet theatre knows also plays in a lighter vein. They might even be described as more superficial. Yet in these brief sketches of the humorous there is much fresh charm, the source of which lies in the profound optimism which permeates the



G. PIMENOV : Workers in a Theatre Box.

whole of Soviet life. Foremost among these plays are : *Squaring the Circle* and *The Path of Flowers* by V. Katayev, and *Another Man's Child* by V. Shkvarkin.

Nevertheless, all these ramifications of dramatic art do not overshadow the main line of Soviet dramaturgy. Kirshon's *Bread*, Afinogenov's *The Eccentric*, Vishnevsky's *Optimistic Tragedy*, Fadeyev's *The Nineteen*, Leonov's *Skutavetsky*, and a number of other plays, continue to introduce ever new features into the image of the hero of Socialist construction. Well-merited success is also enjoyed by the plays of Pogodin, among which *My Friend* impresses by the particularly masterful portrayal of the central figure of the play, the chief of construction of a great new factory.

III.

By the side of the Soviet plays much room is accorded by the theatres of the U.S.S.R. to the works of the classics of the dramatic art. The plays of Shakespeare and Schiller, dramatic versions of novels by Balzac, Tolstoi and Dostoyevsky, and the plays of Ostrovsky are produced in nearly all the Soviet theatres. Lastly, historical plays by Soviet authors (as, for example, *Peter I.* by Alexey Tolstoi) are also produced on the stage of the Soviet theatre.

In the production of plays mirroring Soviet life the producers and the actors of the U.S.S.R. are faced with the task of re-creating new images never before shown on the stage ; but in the production of classical plays or of plays dealing with the historical past, they are faced with a different task—the task of revaluating the great literary works, the problem of disclosing their social-class nature, their social content. "Consider that there can be but one approach to the classics : one must penetrate with the eye of the modern man into the whole material of the play and find therein the social forms which compose the work," says Alexey Tolstoi.

The originality of the Soviet theatre lies in this approach. Here the doctrine of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin is mirrored in art.

IV.

We say "originality of the Soviet theatre." And indeed, the Soviet theatre represents a unified entity to a certain degree. It works on a common task, and by a common method. Nevertheless, this by no means

implies a levelling of Soviet theatrical culture and dramaturgy. Realism is a concept sufficiently broad to allow great variety in the methods of reproducing truth and reality. The Soviet theatre knows a great many styles derived from the common general style of Soviet art—Socialist realism.

An acquaintance with at least the theatres of Moscow demonstrates the great variety of trends in staging which exists in the Soviet theatre. By the side of the life-like realism of the Maly Theatre we find the heroic realism of the Vakhtangov Theatre, of the Theatre of the Revolution, and of the Zavadsky Theatre ; by the side of Tairov's "synthetic theatre," in which pantomimes and even operas and operettas are staged besides dramatic works (Kamerny Theatre) we find the theatre which tries to exhaust the possibilities of the purely dramatic acting of the actor to the utmost, which is based on the Stanislavsky system, First Moscow Art Theatre, Second Moscow Art Theatre and their affiliated theatres.

Finally, the Meyerhold Theatre directed by the indefatigable innovator of the Soviet Theatre, Vsevolod Meyerhold, who has placed the stamp of his great personality upon the acting of the actors of his school, upon the stage settings, and upon the musical accompaniment to his productions.

And what about the national theatres? When one visits the theatres of the numerous nationalities of the Soviet Union is it not like visiting a real school of great variety? He who has seen such productions as *Fatherland* in the Berezh Theatre of the Ukraine, *Blow, Wind!* in the Latvian Theatre, *Hamlet* in the Azerbaijan Theatre, etc., will certainly have noted the national distinctions in the play of the actors and in the stage settings of the productions.

Thus, in the theatres of the numerous nationalities of the U.S.S.R. the traces of ethnographical culture and of folklore are still apparent.

Frequently, the realistic theatrical art of various nationalities of the Soviet Union is coloured in the bright tones of revolutionary romance. While the Georgians present brilliant revolutionary romances in the form of tragedies, the Jews display equal mastery in this respect along the line of comedy and satire.

Soviet art, being far removed from eclecticism, is not afraid of absorbing the cultural values of all times and of all nations. The stronger each of the national theatres of the Soviet Union grows, the greater becomes

its influence upon the cultures of the other nationalities.

It is necessary to note yet another feature common to the Soviet theatre as a whole. This is the exceptional attention accorded to the actor. Even a producer of such exceptionally strong artistic will as Meyerhold, who formerly seemed to be the sole actor, playwright, decorator and composer of his theatre, is at present endeavouring to combine his bold plans as a producer with the broad initiative of the individual actor. The depiction of the new hero, the new man of the Soviet country, demands the whole of the actor and not merely individual elements of his talent: it depends on creative work and not mere passive impressionability and timid obedience.

Thus, such an abundance of young talented actors is to be observed in the Soviet theatre. By the side of the best actors of the older generation: Kachalov, Moskvina, Knipper-Chekhova (First Moscow Art Theatre); Klimov, Massalitinova, Blumenthal-Tamara (Maly Theatre); Pevtsov, Monakhov, Korchagina-Alexandrovskaia (Leningrad Dramatic Theatre); Papazyan (Armenian State Theatre), we may mention such outstanding young actors as Martinson (Theatre of the Revolution), Ygor Ilyinsky (Meyerhold Theatre), Babanova (Moscow Revolution Theatre), Goriunov (Vakhtangov Theatre).

V.

The Soviet opera and ballet has followed the same course during the Revolutionary period, although perhaps somewhat more slowly than the dramatic theatres. Here, again, is to be observed, above all, an appreciable numerical increase.

Instead of the 8 operatic theatres which existed in Tsarist Russia before the Revolution, there are now 46 operatic theatres in the U.S.S.R.

Moscow alone has four operatic theatres (prior to the Revolution operatic performances and ballets were given in only two theatres, in the Grand Imperial Theatre and in the Zimin Theatre).

Such quantitative growth has enabled the operatic theatre to specialise on definite operatic themes which have therefore fully developed in the U.S.S.R.

The Grand Academic Operatic and Ballet Theatre in Moscow is a model grand opera theatre. It is a theatre of great artistry, possessing the best vocal forces (Nezhdanova, Barssova, Petrov, Kozlovsky) and choreo-

graphic forces (Geltser, Krieger, Semyonova) in the Soviet Union and the best Soviet orchestra, one of the best in the world.

This theatre endeavours to work with the best means and on the best material. In its repertoire are the classics of Russian opera: Glinka, Tchaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Borodin, Moussorgsky. The Western operatic repertoire is represented here by such names as Verdi, Wagner, Gounod, etc. The conductors Golovanov, Feier, the young Melik-Pashaev, and the outstanding producers, Smolich and Lossky, impart the finesse of a great art to all the productions of the theatre. All these productions are distinguished by their impressive splendour.

Verdi's *Othello* and Tchaikovsky's *Queen of Spades*, produced during the last season, are classic examples of the producer's art.

The Grand Theatre also has a branch in Moscow. The latter has a more varied repertoire and more variety in its methods of production.

In addition to the interesting production of Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*, we see here *The Four Despots* of De Ferrari, and the opera of the Armenian composer, Spendiaryan, *Almast*, a treasure chest of Armenian and Persian melody.

Of the other operatic theatres of Moscow, we will mention the Nemirovich-Danchenko and the Stanislavsky Theatres, directed by Nemirovich-Danchenko and Stanislavsky, the illustrious theatrical workers who have done so much to imbue the Soviet theatre with realistic culture.

The Stanislavsky Theatre endeavours to combine word, song and rhythmic motion, into a unified entity animated by a common creative thought and experience. The repertoire of this theatre consists mainly of Russian operas, presented in a new way and showing a great understanding of Russian history.

Similar aims are pursued by the Nemirovich-Danchenko Theatre. This theatre, however, does not confine itself to Russian operatic art. On the contrary, western European operas predominate in its repertoire. It has staged among others Lécocq's *The Daughter of Madam Angot* and Offenbach's *Pericla*. The latest production of this theatre was the new opera by Shostakovich *Katerina Izmailova*, originally named by the author *Lady Macbeth of Mtsenk District* (after the story of the same name by Leskov).

Last, but not least, even the Soviet operetta has in recent years been acquiring the qualities that are characteristic of Soviet art. By the side of the classical repertoire

Soviet operettas that are clearly imbued with the elements of social satire (*Violet of Montmartre*, *The Heart of the Port*, etc.), are now beginning to be produced. Operettas are being produced by such a capable producer as V. Bebutov, who imparts great polish and grace to many operetta performances.

A similar differentiation in genres is also to be observed in Leningrad, where the former Maryinsky Theatre adheres to principles similar to those of the Grand Theatre of Moscow, whereas the Leningrad Little Opera Theatre approaches the three "experimental" theatres of Moscow. The latter has staged a number of remarkable productions, *Leaping through a Shadow*, and *Johnny*, by Kezenek, *The Nose*, by Shostakovich, and quite recently *Kamarinsky Muzhik*, by the young twenty-two year old composer, Zhelobinsky, who based his opera on the historic material of the peasant uprising which took place at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

Great activity is also being developed by Ukrainian national opera and ballet in Kiev and Kharkov, to which the talented composers Yanovsky, Lyatoshinsky and others are contributing.

No less intensive is the work of the opera in Georgia, in Azerbaijan, and lately in Armenia also, where the First State Opera Theatre of Erivan opened in 1933 with the production of the opera *Almast*.

The Azerbaijan Theatre has been enriched by the interesting opera by Glière, who has lived for a long time in Azerbaijan. Glière composed the score for the Azerbaijan fairy tale *Shakh Zanen*, which was dramatised by the Azerbaijan playwright Fet Ali Lakhutov, using the folk melodies as the basis for his composition.

Among the Soviet operas created during the past seventeen years, of particular interest were Shishov's *Tonsorial Artist*, Pototsky's *The Break Through*, Korchmarev's *Ivan the Soldier*, Vassilenko's *Sons of the Sun* (an episode from the Chinese rebellion of 1900), and Moussorgsky's *Wedding*, completed by Ippolitov-Ivanov.

All these operas were subsequently excelled by more independent operatic music, already bearing the stamp of genuine Soviet art: Knipper's *City of Winds*, and primarily Shostakovich's *The Nose* (after the story by Gogol) and *Lady Macbeth*, already referred to above.

Shostakovich in his last opera revealed himself as an excellent melodist, the creator of a number of superb arias and choruses

(particularly the chorus in the last act).

Of Soviet ballets mention should be made first of all of Vassilenko's *Handsome Joseph*, Glière's *Red Poppy*, and Asafiev's *Flame of Paris*, the latter being to a considerable extent an interesting revival of the music of the times of the Great French Revolution. A splendid performance in the role of heroine in this ballet was given by the Moscow ballerina, Semyonova.

VI.

In speaking of the Soviet theatre, one cannot pass on without mentioning the stage settings.

Pre-revolutionary Russia, as is known, was fairly rich in scenic designers. The names of such artists as Golovin, Bakst, Sudeykin, Somov and Benoit were widely known abroad, especially through the productions of the Diaghileff ballet.

The traditions of those masters of decorative art are still felt in the Soviet theatre. They are being upheld in the first place by Fedorovsky, and lately also by Konchalovsky, who has painted interesting sets for *The Four Despots*, produced by the Experimental Theatre in Moscow. These scenes reproduce eighteenth-century Venice, immersed by the artist in brilliant sunshine.

Nevertheless, already during the first years of the Revolution, these traditions of scenic designing were greatly shaken. They were opposed by the constructivist artists. The constructivists, justly condemned their talented predecessors for their excessive infatuation with the cult of "self-sufficient beauty" to the detriment of scenic purposefulness of action. The constructivists, in the manner of "Left petit-bourgeois artists," set their faces against decorativeness in general, which essentially meant the denial of artistic stage-setting as such.

Nevertheless, there was a wholesome kernel in their activity. Without concentrating on the synthetic visual image, they endeavoured to construct upon the stage the more convenient "casels for the play of the actor." By means of movable platforms, ladders, and bridges, they endeavoured to accentuate the intrinsic development of the action and even the psychology of the *dramatis personæ*, which in theory they denied.

This latter fact—consideration of the intrinsic course of action—precisely distinguishes the Soviet decorators from the pre-revolutionary scenic designers who adhered to the cult of "self-sufficient beauty." The

Soviet artists, having long since renounced the sterile theory of constructivism, while giving a finished synthetic image, endeavour above all to create an architectural whole which contributes to the solution of purely histrionic problems. The architectural image lies at the bottom of the decorative art of the best Soviet scenic designers: Rabinovich, Ryndin, Tischler, Levin, and also the famous graphic artist Favorsky, who has created a number of unforgettable stage sets for the production of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* in the Second Moscow Art Theatre.

VII.

In conclusion, a few words on the Soviet rural theatre, which has so greatly developed in recent years.

The contrast between town and village in regard to cultural and social standards, which was so great in Tsarist Russia, had its reflection in the pre-Revolutionary theatre.

There were almost no rural theatres in pre-Revolutionary Russia. Individual attempts by some *Zemstvos* to foster the development of popular theatres in the villages were insignificant and brought no real results.

At the present time in the U.S.S.R. there are about 150 travelling theatres, of which the majority serve the villages. Already in 1933, when there were about 100 travelling theatres in the U.S.S.R., they catered to a total of 5,500,000 spectators.

This theatrical network, however, does not constitute the basic theatrical network of the Soviet village.

In addition to the travelling theatres the Soviet village is widely served by the collective farm amateur theatres which are non-professional theatres directed by visiting professional artists. While the travelling theatres in 1934 were granted a subsidy of 5,500,000 roubles by the State, liberal subsidies were also given to the amateur theatres, about 2,000,000 roubles having been granted this year for the services of instructors, etc.

Finally, a network of permanently located collective farm theatres is beginning to spread which it is planned to extend widely, by the end of the second Five-Year Plan period. On January 11th of the current year the first permanently located Collective Farm Art Theatre was opened in the village of Medvedka, while in July the branch theatre of the oldest dramatic theatre in Moscow, the Maly Theatre, was removed to the village.

In connection with the cultural growth of the Soviet village, the repertoire of the rural theatres begins to resemble more and more the repertoire of the urban theatres, although a number of specific requirements of the Soviet village make it necessary to supplement the repertoire with plays expressly written for the collective farm theatre.

We have dwelt in detail on the theatre of the Soviet village because only by appreciating both the intensive and extensive growth of the Soviet theatre shall we be able to comprehend the peculiar traits of the Socialist culture which is being embodied in the life of the toiling masses of the Soviet Union.

CINEMA

By Prof. N. YESUITOV

I

Pre-Revolutionary Russian cinematography was essentially vulgar and far behind the European and American cinema.

It combined stage-property technique with cheap psychological drama on themes borrowed from popular novels and songs of that time. Individual, more cultured cinematographers, wishing to raise the artistic level of the Russian cinema, turned to the filming of works by classic writers such as Leo Tolstoy (*Anna Karenina*, produced by Gardin), or Göncharov (*The Cliff*, produced by Chardynin); nevertheless they proved powerless to counteract the main stream of cinematographic banality.

During the period of the War, the Russian film industry, in common with other Russian industrial enterprises, experienced a spell of feverish revival, only to drop back into a crisis on the eve of the October Revolution.

Only a few small, poorly equipped film studios, half-wrecked by the sabotage of their former owners, existed at the time the cinema industry was nationalised by the Soviet Government. Tsarist Russia manufactured no raw film or cinema equipment, which was imported from abroad.

Tremendous efforts were required on the part of the Soviet Government and the cinema workers to develop our cinema industry to its present condition. At present there are fourteen factories in the U.S.S.R. for the production of art films; four factories and thirty-two scientific research cinema bases for the production of scientific and educational films; four factories and sixteen bases for production of topical films and one cinema railway-train. About 6,000 cinema workers are engaged in these undertakings.

As a result of the activity of all these enterprises during the fifteen years of Soviet cinematography, about 700 titles of art films were released, a huge number of chronicle films, and numerous other films.

The number of both permanent and travelling cinema theatres has also grown enormously. Already, by the end of 1933, there were 10,923 cinema theatres in the Soviet cities and 18,240 in the Soviet villages.

II

The early years of Soviet cinematography were years when the people strained all their forces in defence of the new Socialist order upon the battlefronts of the civil war. The very Decree which nationalised the cinema industry and introduced State control over all the cinema enterprises was signed by Lenin in August, 1919, at a most trying moment in the Revolutionary struggle. The events taking place in the country were for the first time reflected in the topical and agitational films of that period. Cinema operators took film records of episodes of the civil war, of Soviet conferences, Soviet festivals, demonstrations, of the heroic struggle against famine and ruin--of all the joys and sorrows of the young Republic. The heroes of those chronicles were the masses. "Film them," Lenin once said, pointing to the workers and peasants gathered near the Kshesinska Palace in Petrograd in 1917, "for they are making history."

III

The first new tendency in the Soviet cinema was introduced by the school of Leo Kuleshov, who had already begun to work during the civil war.

Kuleshov's technical gropings entitle him to be called the father of Soviet cinematography. Although none of his productions rises to the level of the best Soviet films, nevertheless he was a daring innovator and during a certain period his work in many respects determined the direction of the experiments of the Soviet cinema.

Kuleshov's first full-length film was a picture entitled *The Unusual Adventures of Mr. West in the Land of the Bolsheviks*, produced in 1924. Kuleshov displayed his great and interesting craftsmanship in this film, but at the same time also his ideological limitations. It was a film with a Soviet subject, yet without the portrayal of genuine people of Soviet reality.

The paradoxical theory of the "actor-model" proclaimed by Kuleshov was most consistently embodied in his picture *By Order of the Lane* (after Jack London). Subsequently Kuleshov departed a good deal from the formalistic line and from his passion for tricks and outward effects.

His diligent studies had brought fruit, and in 1933 Kuleshov succeeded in producing a great social canvas in his *Great Comforter*.

IV

One of the early fighters for Soviet themes in the cinema is Dziga Vertov. Vertov began his cinematographic work at the same time as Kuleshov. Kuleshov advocated the "acting cinema" as it was then termed, which bases the pictures essentially on definite subjects. Vertov, on the contrary, fought for the documental film, for the picture without scenario, without actors, and without studios.

The first productions of Dziga Vertov were the so-called "Cinema Truths," peculiar cinematographic newspapers named after the newspaper *Pravda* (*Truth*). Vertov managed to issue 23 numbers of *Cinema Truth*. His chronicle films have retained to this day the charm of exceptionally temperamental documents. The most remarkable number of *Cinema Truth* was the one dedicated to the funeral of Lenin. This number was subsequently incorporated in the composite film *Three Songs about Lenin*. Vertov's creative talent reached its maturity in *One Sixth of the World*, a film released in 1926, presenting a beautiful poem about the Land of the Soviets, its cultural and economic life. This poem was built entirely on film-documents. In his latest production, *Three Songs about Lenin*, Vertov's art reaches exceptional brilliancy in composition and particularly in the melodiousness and excellence of the rhythm.

The documental film was born of the topical or chronicle film, but it has far outstepped the limits of the latter. The achievements of the Vertov group have served as a stimulus for further development of the Soviet cinema.

Serge Eisenstein has succeeded in finding a high artistic form for the monumental and stirring ideas of the revolutionary epoch. He has created his own "intellectual" cinematograph which operates with big social concepts. Emphasising the educational aims of cinematography, Eisenstein has endeavoured, according to his own expression, "to put an end to the conflicts between the language of logic, the system of concepts, and the languages of images."

Eisenstein's first appearance in the cinema (previously he was a theatrical stage manager) was in the picture *The Strike*, which vibrated with freshness and daring.

His second film, *Battleship Potemkin*, may be considered the first great production of revolutionary epics in the cinema. In this film, as in the preceding one, Eisenstein has shown the life of large human congregations, taking the human mass as the hero. *Potemkin* had tremendous success both in the U.S.S.R. and abroad. Such scenes as the appearance of the sailor Doroshenko in the stokehold, or the sailing of the battleship out of the harbour, or the shooting of the demonstrators on the Nikolas staircase in Odessa, have reached the acme of perfection in world cinematographic achievements.

In *October* (1927) the principles of the Eisenstein school became even more crystallised, acquiring even greater completeness and definiteness. The highest point of dramatic tension in the film is the episode of the storming of the Winter Palace, in which the art of Eisenstein in the construction and composition of film scenes reaches its focal point of excellence.

The film *Old and New* (*The General Line*) was dedicated to the Socialist reorganisation of the village. This interesting picture is not free, however, from excessive eccentricity which detracts from its artistic value.

Eisenstein is working at present on a new film entitled *Bezhin Lug* (*Bezhin Meadow*), dealing with the collective farm village. Besides this he does a vast amount of instructional work and is writing a book on *Cinema Production*.

VI

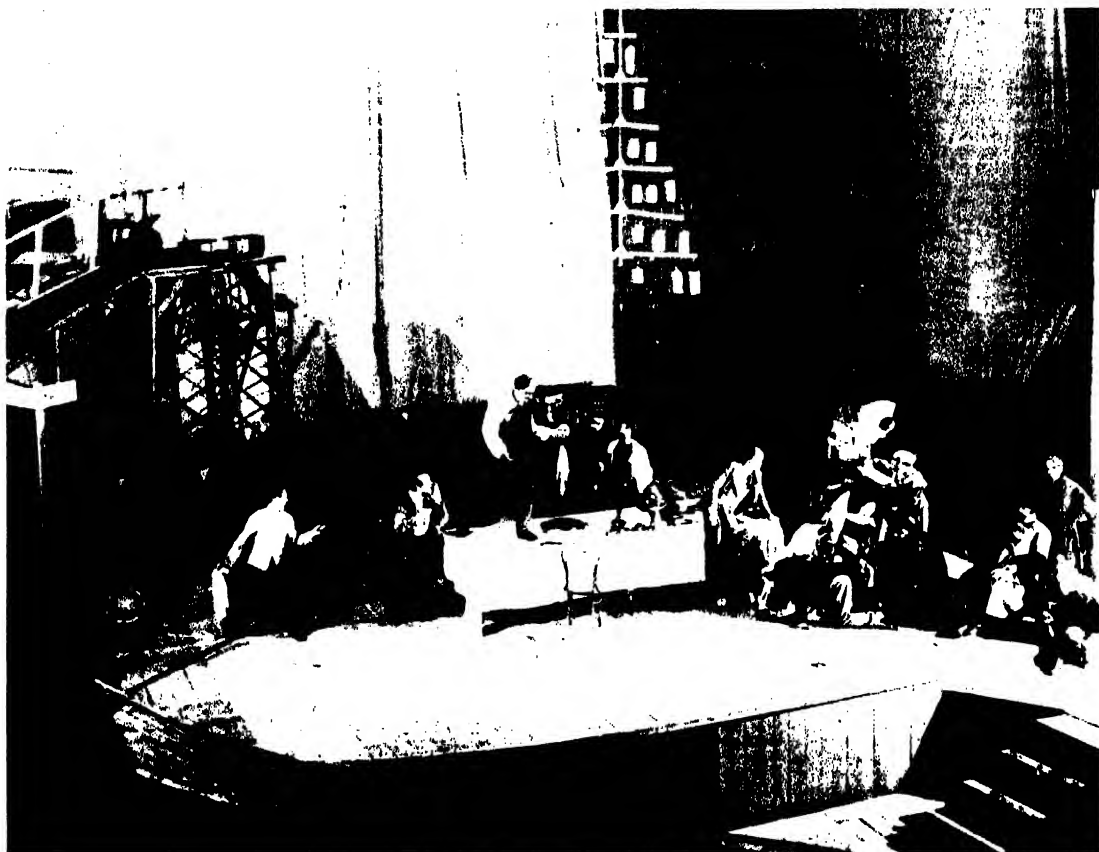
The Eisenstein school branched off into a number of groups of varying artistic tendencies. Particularly strong has been the influence of Eisenstein on the producers Kozintsev and Trauberg who, in their turn,

THE THEATRE



"My Friend," a play by N. Pogodin. Sets designed by Slepianov. Theatre of the Revolution, Moscow.

" . . . impresses by the particularly masterful portrayal of the central figure of the play, the Chief of Construction of a great new factory."



"The Forest," a play by Ostrovsky, Act 3. Stage Sets by Slepyanov



"The Mandate," by Erdman, Act 3. Stage Sets by Slepyanov



"La Dame aux Camélias." Meyerhold Theatre

"Vsevolod Meyerhold has placed the stamp of his great personality upon the acting . . . , the stage settings, and the musical accompaniment to his productions."

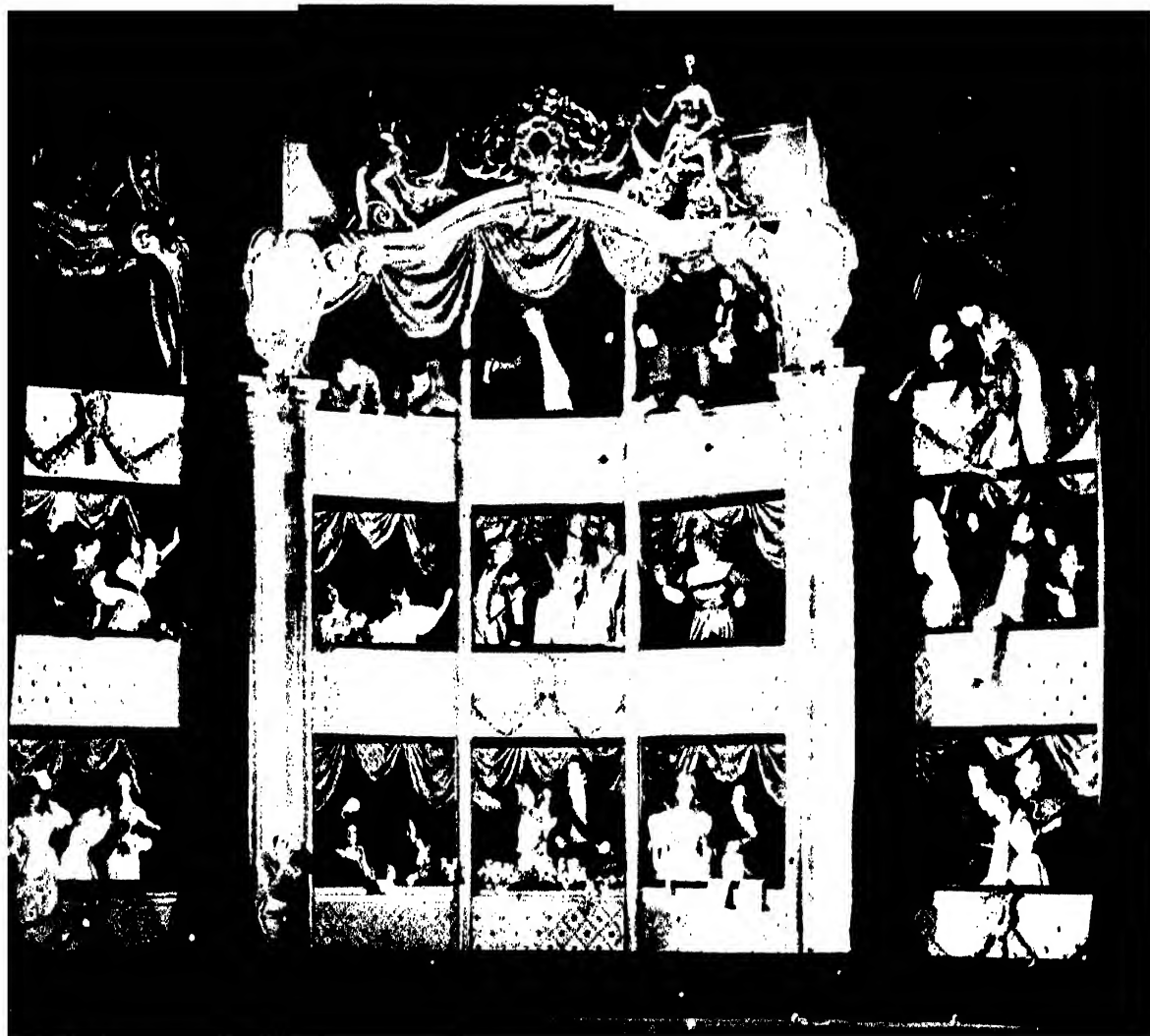
"The Inspector-General," a comedy by Gogol. Meyerhold Theatre

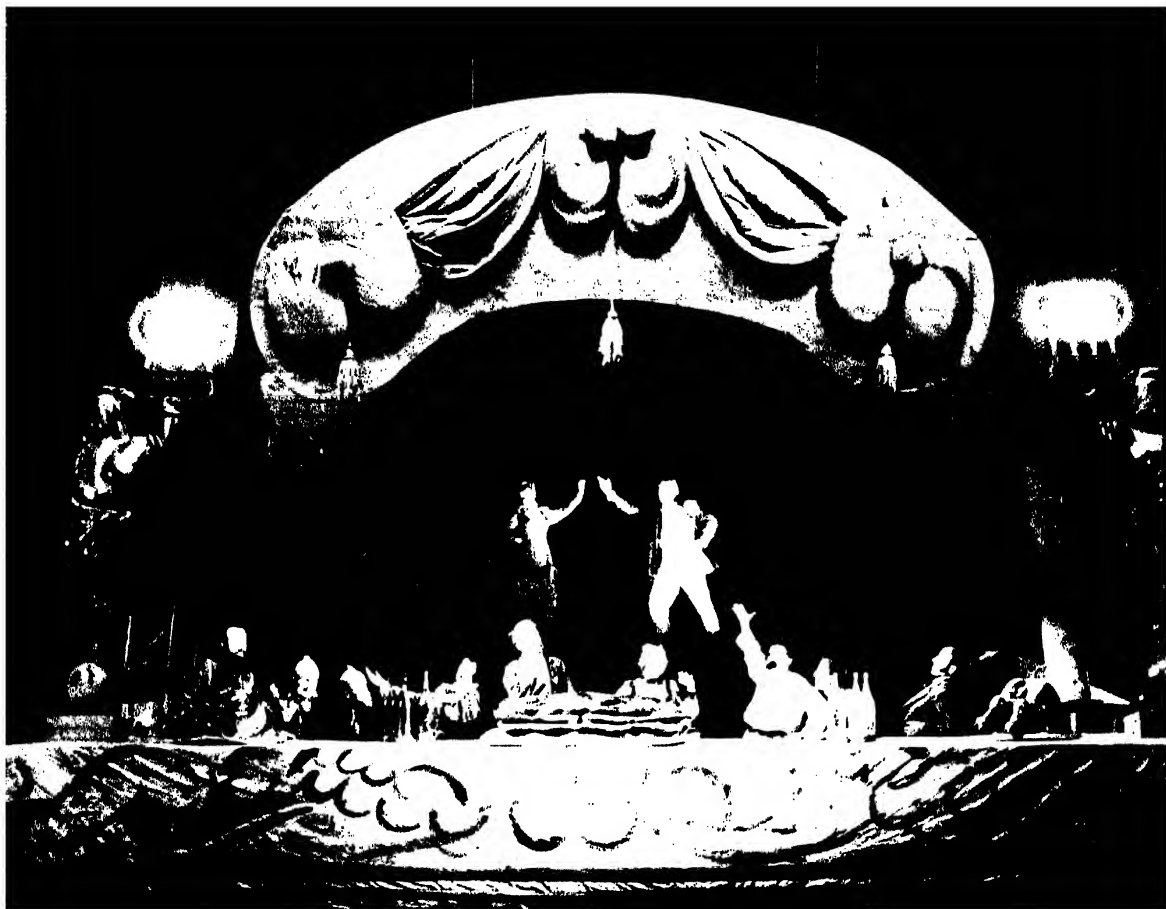


the heroic realism of the Vakhtangov Theatre."

"The Human Comedy," after Balzac, Act 5. Stage Sets by Isaac Rabinovich.

Vakhtangov Theatre, Moscow

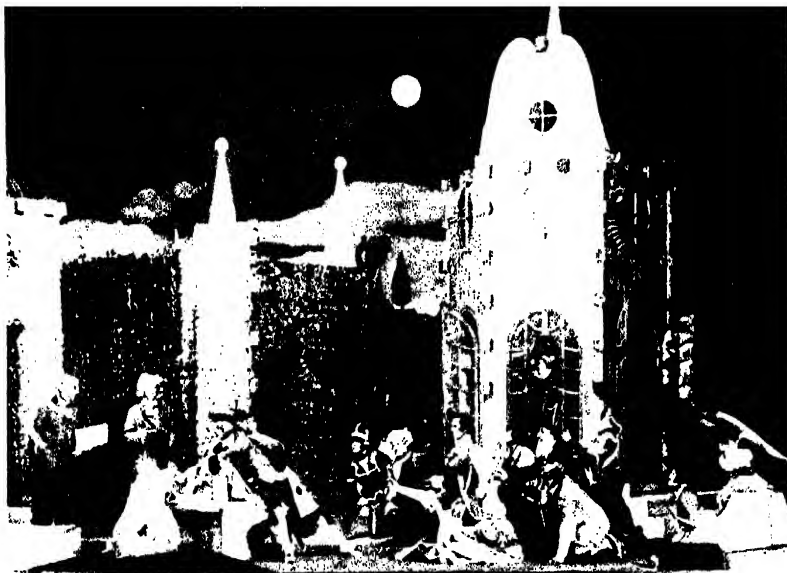




" Dictatorship," a play by I. Mikitenko.



" Yegor Bulychev," a play by Maxim Gorky, Act 2. Vakhtangov Theatre, Moscow.



"The Marriage of Figaro," designed by A. Golovin and produced by People's Artist of the Republic K. Stanislavsky, Act 5.

MOSCOW ART THEATRE



"Good Life," a play by G. Amaglobeli, Act 2.

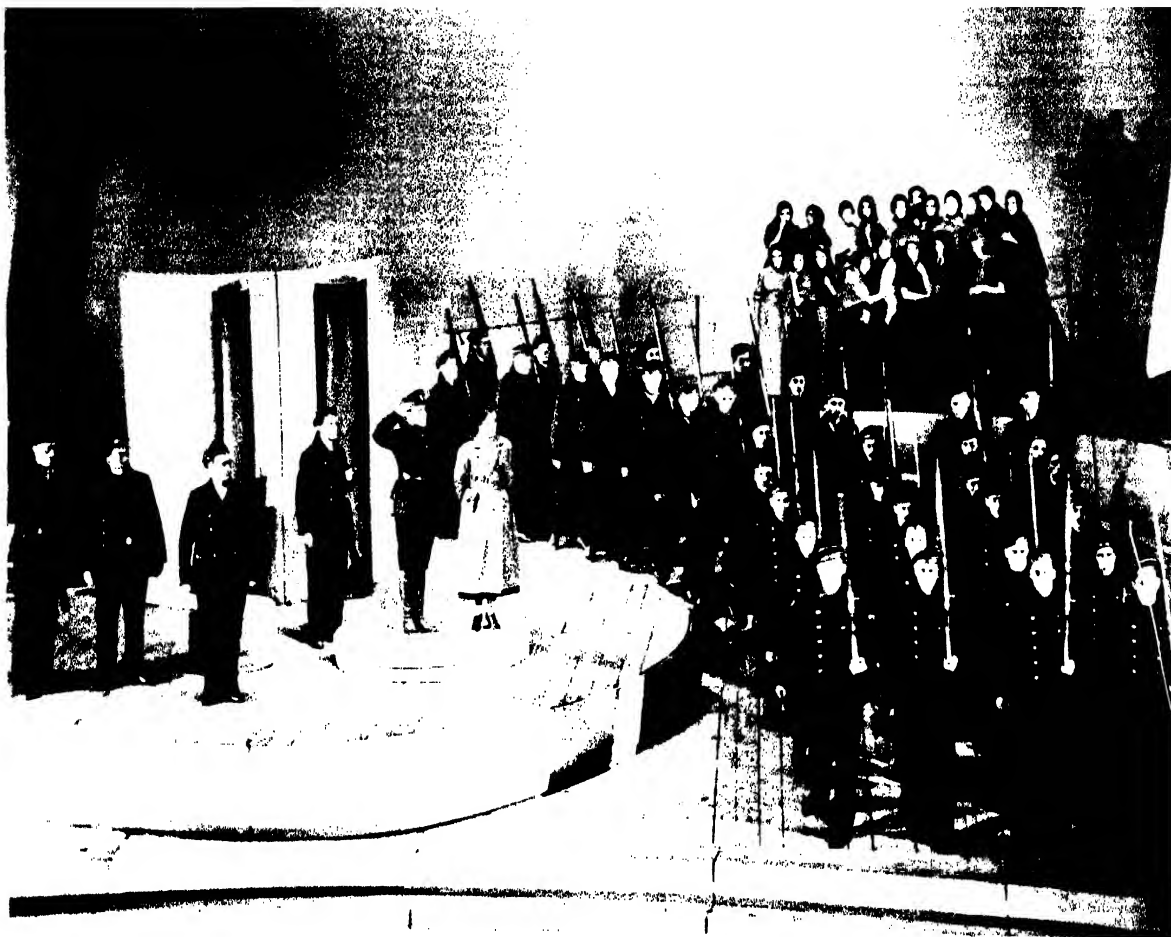


"Fear," a play by Afinogenov, Act 4.

"Joy Street," a play
by Zarkhi. Production
and sets by Sliepyanov.



London and her police force as they are seen by a Soviet playwright and theatrical designer

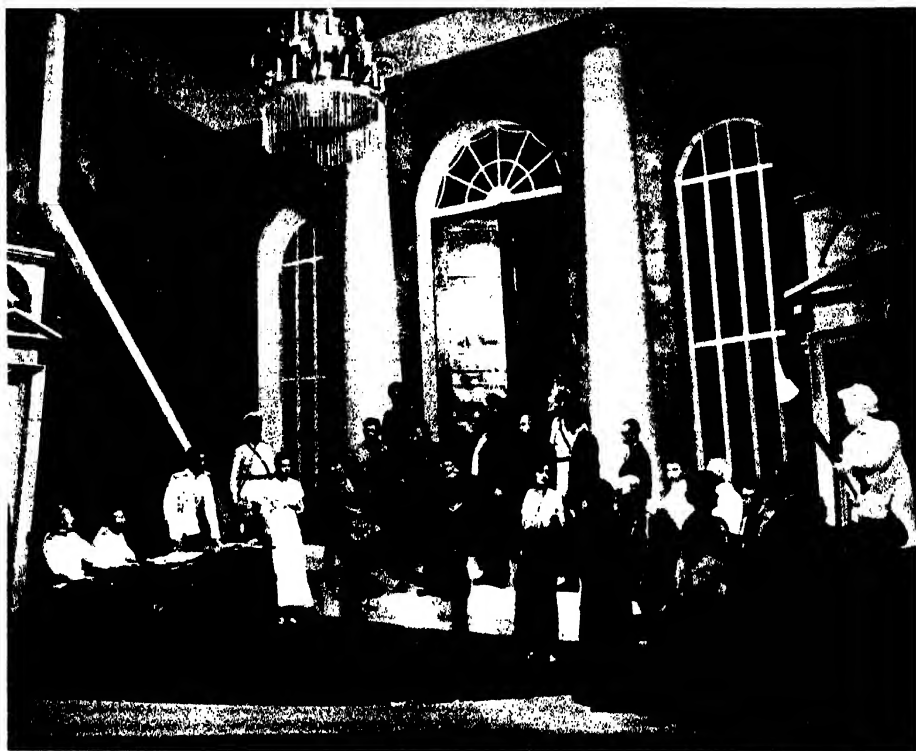


"An Optimistic Tragedy," a play by V. Vishnevsky, produced by A. Tairov. Sets designed by V. Ryndin



"Mutiny," a play by Furmanov, Act 3.

"Enemies," a play
by Maxim Gorky.



MOSCOW TRADE UNION THEATR.

"Seamen of Catarro," by the German playwright Wolf, produced by A. Dikiy.





"Sorochinka Fair," an
opera by Moussorgsky,
with sets designed by
Shifrin. Nemirovich.



"Katerina Izmailova"
("The Lady Macbeth
of Mzensk District"),
an opera by D. Shosta-
kovich, Act 1. Sets
designed by V. Dmit-
riev. Produced by
People's Artist of the
Republic V. Nemiro-
vich-Danchenko.



"Katerina Izmailova,"
Act 4.

FOR THE YOUNG SPECTATOR

"Tchorny Yar" ("The Black Jungle"), a play by Afinogenov
with stage sets by Shifrin.



PLAYS FOR CHILDREN



"The Story of Tsar Saltan," after the tale by Pushkin. Sets by Ryndin.



"The Nigger Boy and the Monkey," produced by Honoured Artist Natalie Satz, with sets designed by Holz. Moscow Theatre for Children.

"Tomakov Pereulok," by V. Smirnova.
Designed by Shifrin. "The Nigger Boy and the Monkey."



"Favorsky . . . has created a number of unforgettable stage sets for the production of Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night" at the Second Moscow Art Theatre."



"Twelfth Night," a comedy by Shakespeare. Sets designed by V. Favorsky. The garden scene.

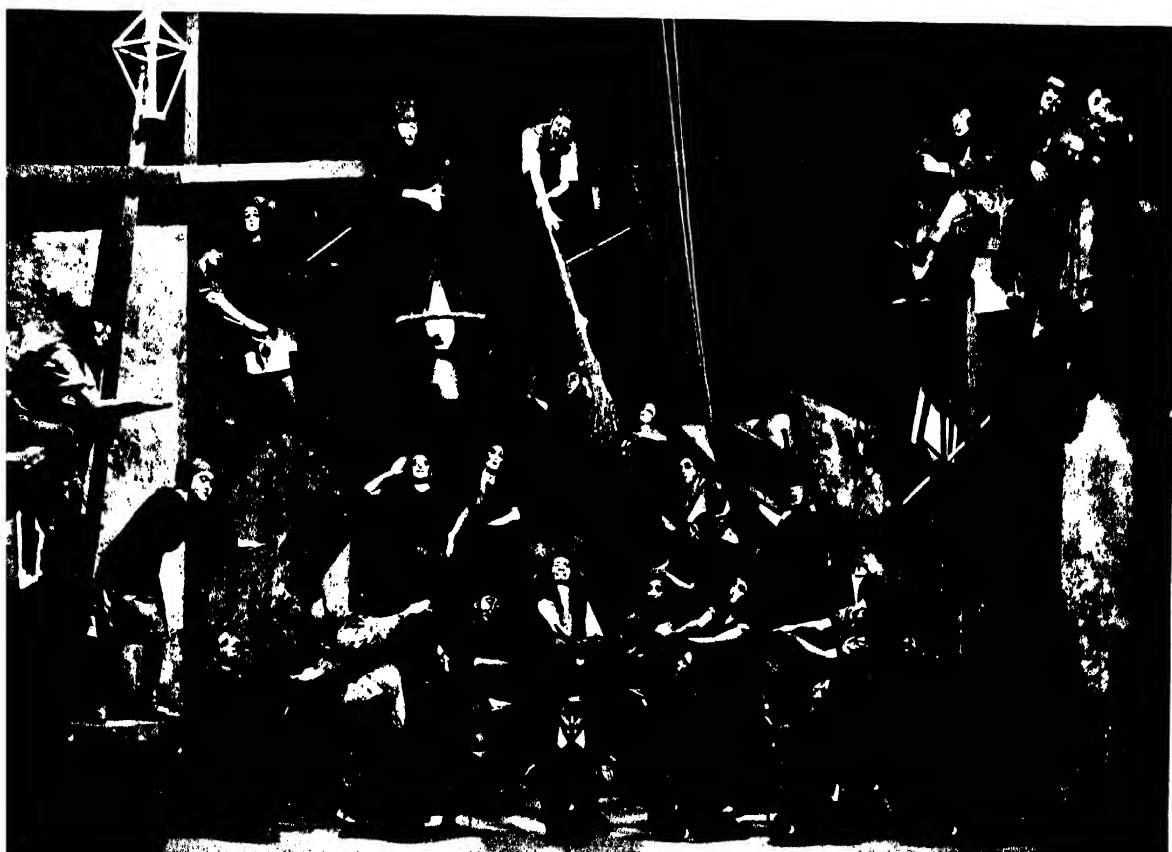
Above and Below: Costumes designed by A. Tischler for "Carmen," for a production at the Gypsy Theatre, Moscow.



"... the Jewish State Theatre occupies a leading place among those of the Soviet Union."

Below "Severity of the Law," a play by Bergelson, Act 2. Designed by Axelrod. (State Jewish Theatre)

Below "200,000," a play by Sholom-Aleikhem, Act 1. (State Jewish Theatre)





O P E R A

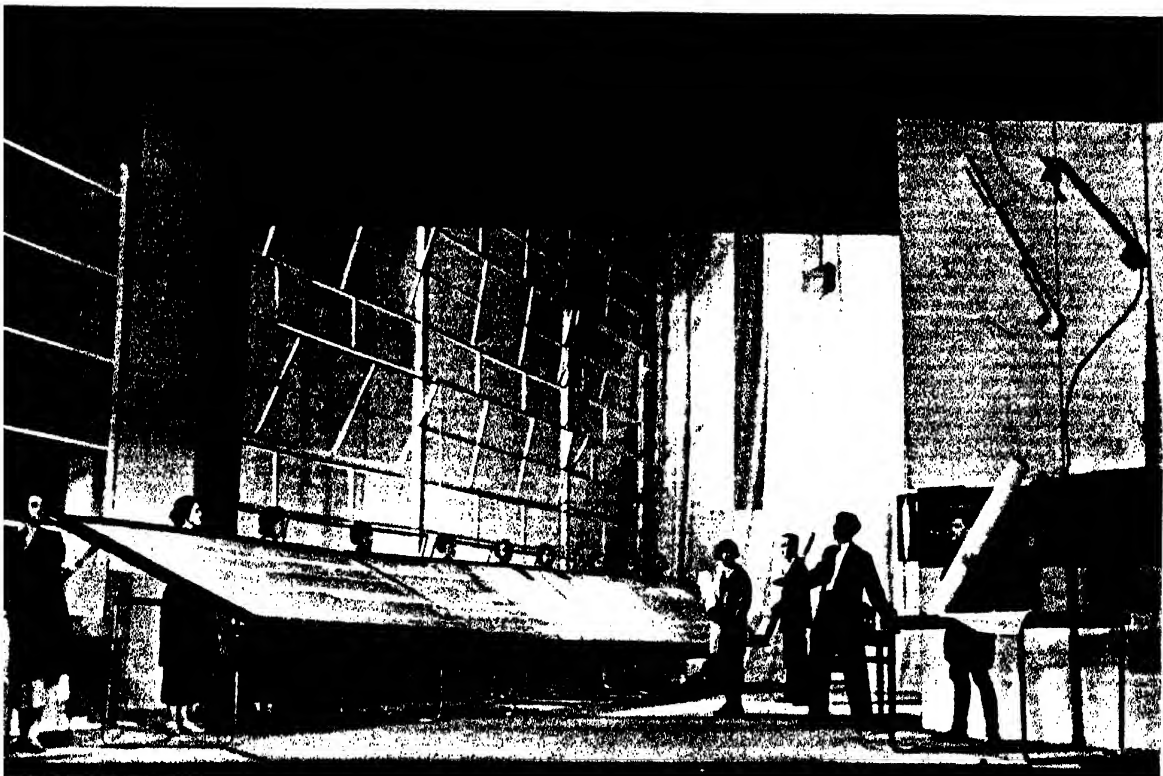
"The Queen of Spades," an opera by Tchaikovsky, Act 3. Sets designed by V. Dmitriev.





"Lyubov Yarovaya," a play by Trenev, Act, 4. Artyom, May 1935.
Tsimmer.

The last scene of "Nonsense," a play by A. Finn. Sets designed
by Bosulayev. Produced by A. Dikiy.



THE CINEMA



AELITA, 1919-20.

Directed by G. Protazanov.

Little seen outside Russia, this Martian fantasy directed by Protazanov marked the most interesting experiment of the revolutionary cinema. Based on a novel by Alexis Tolstoi, with settings designed by Isaac Rabinovitch and costumes by Alexandra Exter.



THE END OF ST. PETERSBURG, 1927.

Like *OCTOBER*, Pudovkin's film was made to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the 1917 revolution. The subject is the same, the fall of Petrograd, but whereas Eisenstein's film is a panorama of ideas without a hero, the events of Pudovkin's film are portrayed through people composing a mass from which the potential heroes emerge. Technically, the style explored further Pudovkin's analytical methods of constructive editing, but his symbolism became more human than the inanimate references of *MOTHER*. Again, he employed some professional actors—Baranovskaia and Tchistiakov.



THE MAN WITH THE MOVIE CAMERA, 1928.

Vladimir

Since 1922, Dziga Vertov and his brother, Mikhail Kaufman, had experimented with the theory of the Kino-Eye, at first editing news-reel material for "Kino Calendar" and "Kino Truth," but later carrying the method into filming the non-acted and non-produced document as exemplified more recently by *ENTHUSIASM* and *THREE SONGS OF LENIN*. A brilliant display of pyrotechnics, this exposition of the Kino-Eye said little more than that. Vertov, as a documentalist, has still to get to grips with the sociological importance of his material. Working in this same trend of documentary are the regisseurs Esther Schub and Schneiderov.

THE GENERAL LINE, 1929.

With the advent of the first Five Year Plan, the cinema workers realised that instead of taking subjects of blood and thunder from the period of military communism, they must grapple with industrial, agricultural, social-psychological reconstruction. But the problem arose that the directors of such films had to possess or acquire an intimate understanding of the continual economic and political progress of the country in order to interpret these new themes, added to which the material itself was less suited to film treatment than that of the early period. *THE GENERAL LINE* took a romantic approach to collective farming and evaded the social and economic issues by artificially created trickery, such as the marriage of the bull.



STORM OVER ASIA, 1928.

In this film of the supposed heir to Jhengiz Khan with a setting in Tibet, Pudovkin attempted to amalgamate natural material and studio produced scenes. By means of tricks and conjuring, he tried to create acting from natural types. "My actors are everywhere: in the streets and on the trams; they are not artists, they are physically and psychologically right." Passages are of great technical brilliance in editing and certain episodes, such as the shooting of the Mongol leader, revealed Pudovkin's remarkable power of psychological interpretation.



ARSENAL, 1929.

Dovzhenko is the first outstanding director who has worked almost wholly in the Ukraine, using local themes that are "national in form and socialist in content." "Dovzhenko," said Dimanov, "is a poet. Eisenstein can stop the world; Dovzhenko's world runs ahead." Speaking of ARSENAL, Dovzhenko said that when he made the film (previously he had worked as a painter and a diplomatist) it was in the capacity of a fighter, not an artist. "I was a soldier in the struggle against chauvinism. People talk of the symbolism of my films but I never thought of symbolism."



NEW BABYLON, 1929.

A reconstruction of the Paris Commune by Kosintsev and L. Trauberg, this was the first of a cycle to portray distant historical events. Technically, these young directors based their methods on those of Eisenstein and Pudovkin and have since received considerable recognition through such films as ALONE and the YOUTH OF MAXIM, for the latter being awarded the Order of Lenin. Abroad, however, their work has been received with less respect.





TURKSIB, 1929.

Dramatic interpretation of the building of the Turkestan Siberian Railway marked the first attempt at documentary proper in the U.S.S.R., and has achieved very wide success elsewhere. Discarding altogether both story and character and relying only on a geographic-economic theme, Turin's approach to actuality and the urgency of his subject of socialist construction has made the film a model for documentary production. But it is interesting to note that Turin has no other film to his name and now works in an administrative capacity. Not a little of the film's success in Britain was due to its re-editing and titling by John Grierson.



EARTH, 1930.

Probably the most ecstatic of all Soviet films but sometimes attacked because of its emphasis on the biological, EARTH presents the fullest exposition of Dovzhenko's poetic mind. His rich visual sensibility and his philosophic acceptance of nature, life and death, flow into each other in a manner unknown to most Soviet films: while men and trees and fruit around him are of the same substance in this beautiful idyll of the Ukraine. Yet, for all its beauty, EARTH evaded the main social issue of its theme and the coming of the new order to the village was sensationalised by a murdering kulak rather than by the essential changes brought about by the growth of social consciousness.



IVAN, 1932.

The theme of Dovzhenko's first sound film was the building of Dnieprostroi and his idea was to interpret the first step in the change from peasant to proletarian psychology. But the characters, with the exception of the lazy misfit, failed to reflect the struggle for reconstruction. They lacked biographies, so that the interest shifted away from the original psychological problem and became concentrated instead in glorious sequences of the slow flowing Dnieper, and the scenes of cranes, trollies and locomotives moving through illuminated smoke—a dream world of steel and concrete.

TWENTY-SIX COMMISSARS, 1932

Georgian film

Directed by Shengelaya, this was the first important Georgian film. The story traces the involved political development among the Baku oil workers during the 1919 intervention and its most interesting and emotionally successful sequence was the shooting of the Bolshevik commissars in the sand dunes, where they were driven by the interventionists, and the sudden uprising of new commissars at the moment of their death.



COUNTERPLAN, 1932

Russian film

Jointly made by Ermiler and Utkevich, the ideas behind this film of the transitional period were of greater importance than the film itself. Not only was it the first film in which the saboteur was left undetected but it made a definite attempt to show the worker learning his job. In addition it suggested that professional actors might be an essential part of the cinema plan and began to analyse individual characterisation rather than pursue the methods of typage. Before making this film, after his earlier *FRAGMENT OF AN EMPIRE*, Ermiler studied two years at the Communist Academy and worked only on the sequences dealing with the older characters, leaving to Utkevich the handling of young shock-brigaders.



SUBURBIA, 1933

Russian film

Notable for humour which is in the direct line of Soviet comedy, Barnet's story was of the fostering of racial hatred during the War, in which he was greatly helped by the acting of Kusentsova. Originally one of the Kuleshov group, Barnet has specialised in comedy and became well-known through his *MOSCOW THAT LAUGHS AND WEEPS* and *THE GIRL WITH THE HAT BOX*.



CHAPAEV, 1934-5

Russian film

This much discussed "optimistic tragedy" by the directors Vassiliev comes at a moment in Soviet cinema when the relation between the individual and his social background is all important. Though the theme is based on historical fact taken from a novel by Furmanov, Chapaev's commissar, the characters and events are seen through modern eyes. Vassiliev's have made an analysis of character—the political character of the battle and the psychological character of a band of soldiers—because such characterisation represents the mass. Tenderness, love and humour are as integral elements of the film as courage and heroism. The character of the hero is drawn with intimate detail and it is the development of his mind from political illiteracy to social awareness that gives the film distinction.



DESERTER, 1931-3.



ARTEK, 1934.



JAZZ COMEDY, 1934.



THE NEW GULLIVER, 1934.

Pudovkin took two years to make **DESERTER**, his first sound film. He realised quite clearly that there were new and vital problems of socialist realism to be expressed in the cinema but, after the negative success of **THE SIMPLE CASE**, he seemed unable to face the situation. Instead, he went abroad for his subject: once again to strikes and riots, but this time his setting was Hamburg. On the home front, however, political events developed more rapidly than the film and, to save it from being out of date in its ideology, the scenario was changed during editing and whole sequences were suppressed. Technically, Pudovkin became absorbed in his complex montage methods and made several experiments with sound, but the social content of his theme escaped him.

ARTEK was a film entirely made by a young collective group in the Crimea, and produced at the Artek pioneers' colony, with children drawn from all parts of the Union. The story was based on the daily life of the children during their holiday in the Crimea.

As a result of his European and Hollywood travels, G. Alexandrov, formerly Eisenstein's collaborator, tried his hand at what might be called the first Soviet musical comedy—**JAZZ COMEDY**.

Made by Ptoushko, **THE NEW GULLIVER**, a re-interpretation of Swift's theme, was one of the most successful animated films. The figures were made of plasticine and fitted with numerous interchangeable wax masks.

founded a group which called itself the "factory of the eccentric actor" known as "FEKS" (Russian initials of these words).

The group has realised its eccentric methods in *The Exploits of an October Child*, a film replete with poignancy and youthful exuberance. The young producers grew, however, into serious people. Already in their next film, *The Greatcoat* (after Gogol), they manifested not only great cinematographic craftsmanship, but also a true sense of history. They drew upon this experience in their subsequent production, *The Union of the Great Cause* (an episode from the December Revolt of 1825), and also in *New Babylon* (scenes from the life of the Paris Commune).

The pinnacle of art is reached by Kozintsev and Trauberg in their latest picture, *The Youth of Maxim*, depicting the life and progress of a young working man turning revolutionary in the gloomy days of Tsarism.

VII

A different road was followed by the Pudovkin school. While Eisenstein in his *Potemkin* and *October* depicts the masses, Pudovkin in his films concentrates his main attention on individual persons, created by the Revolution. Pudovkin has surrounded these new people with an atmosphere of poetry and warmth, rendering them so as to give the spectator an intimate knowledge of them. His heroes are for the most part people who, though not yet seasoned Revolutionaries are in the process of becoming such with the development of Revolutionary events. The basic theme of Pudovkin is "heroes in the making."

Pudovkin's fame as a film producer began in 1926 by his production of *Mother* (after the novel by Maxim Gorky) which was shown upon the screen throughout the world, like the Eisenstein films. The composition of *Mother*, the resourcefulness of *The End of St. Petersburg*, and the rhythm of *Storm over Asia*, are appraised by the greatest cinema critics as classical models of cinematography.

Pudovkin possesses an amazing gift for the selection of actors for his films. As distinguished from the histrionic art of Kuleshov which hails from Meyerhold, the acting of the Pudovkin school takes its origin from the Moscow Art Theatre.

VIII

Dovzhenko is a film producer who endeavours to make a synthesis of the Eisenstein

and Pudovkin schools. Of course, Dovzhenko does not merely compound the positive qualities of the Eisenstein films with those of the Pudovkin films. An original master, he has struggled for a cinematography of great social ideas, while at the same time saturating his productions with lyricism and emotion. The images of living people created by Dovzhenko grow into big social generalisations.

Dovzhenko's first production, *The Bag of the Diplomatic Messenger*, was soon surpassed by his picture *Zemigora*, a brilliant national epic of the Ukraine. His *Arsenal*, recognised as a big triumph of the Soviet cinema, is an epic of the October Revolution. His latest pictures, *Earth* and *Ivan*, have been just as successful.

Dovzhenko has brought into the Soviet cinema a keenness of pictorial vision. The galloping of horses in *Arsenal*, the still-life in *Earth*, the Dnieper landscape in *Ivan*, are the most picturesque scenes in Soviet cinematography.

Dovzhenko was brought up under the cultural conditions of Soviet Ukraine which, under the national policy of Lenin and Stalin, has regenerated and become a flourishing country. On the basis of this policy a culture is being built up which is "National in form and Socialist in content" (Stalin).

Dovzhenko's art has become the heritage of the whole of the Soviet Union, and so are all the works of moment created in any of the Soviet Republics. Suffice it to mention here the Georgian film producers N. Shengelaia (*Elliso*) and M. Chiaureli (*Habarda* and *The Last Masquerade*), the Ukrainian producer Kavaleridze (*Koliivschina*), and the White Russian producers Tarich (*A Forest Saga*), V. Korsh (*First Company*) and Feinzimmer (*Lieutenant Kizhe*).

All these films have enriched Soviet film art with the stylistic and cultural features of the nationalities inhabiting the Soviet Union.

IX

In 1930 began the development of the Soviet sound film which has achieved great triumphs in recent years. The advent of the sound film, however, has not destroyed the production of silent films, as has been the case in Western Europe and America. Silent films continue to be produced, reaching a high artistic level (e.g., *Boule de Suif*, produced by M. Romm after the story by Maupassant).

Interest in the sound film as an art was first roused by the appearance of such films as *Alone*, by Kozintsev and Trauberg, and especially of *The Pass to Life*, by Ekk.

Next came the sympathetically received talkies of Vertov (*Symphony of Donetz Basin* and *Three Songs about Lenin*), Kuleshov (*The Great Comforter* and *The Horizon*), Pudovkin (*The Deserter*), and Dovzhenko (*Ivan*).

Alongside of these masters of the older generation, high attainments were reached in the sound film by Yudkevich, who produced the talking film *Golden Mountains*, a picture of great ideological significance, and by Ermler, who jointly with Yudkevich produced the picture *Counter Plan*. This film has been recognised as the first big triumph of Socialist realism in the Soviet cinema, the elements of which may be found in all the best Soviet films of the preceding period, in the productions of Pudovkin, Eisenstein, and Dovzhenko.

Counter Plan is a splendid picture which reflects the life of the Soviet proletariat, the builders of Socialism, the struggle for fulfilment of industrial plans in one of the Soviet industrial establishments. A profound and indelible impression is made by the central image of the film, the working man Babchenko.

After *Counter Plan* two roads of development, supplementing each other, became clearly outlined in the Soviet cinema. Along with films of Soviet life, a whole number of films were produced in which the classical works of pre-revolutionary Russian literature were presented to the Soviet public. The best films of this type are: *Judas Golofier* (after Saltykov-Schedrin) by A. Ivanovsky, *St. Petersburg Night* (after Dostoyevsky) by Roshal, and *Tempest* (after Ostrovsky) by Alexandrov.

These are films of high artistic craftsmanship which have advanced the school of the Soviet sound film to a front place in the world (at the Venice International Cinema Exhibition in 1934). During the same period great interest has developed in other cinema activities, notably in the cinema comedy (*Jolly Fellows*, by Alexandrov).

The high standard of such remarkable Soviet films as *Mother*, *Battleship Potemkin*, *Counter Plan*, *Earth*, has been maintained and continued in *Chapayev*, the film produced by the Vasilyevs, who have filmed one of the episodes of the civil war. Their work represented a new synthesis of the creative efforts of the Soviet cinematograph masters Eisenstein, Pudovkin and Dovzhenko.

Great political content (the role of the Bolshevik Party in the formation of the Red Army) was combined by the Vasilyevs with excellent histrionic culture, achieving crystalline clarity and wise simplicity of cinematographic language. The picture has been a tremendous success throughout the country. The impression which it has created on foreign screens and at the International Cinema Festival held in Moscow in February 1935, shows that the *Chapayev* picture has been appreciated also in the West.

Soviet cinematography recently celebrated its fifteenth anniversary. On this occasion high honours were awarded by the Soviet Government to numerous prominent cinema workers--organisers of the film industry, producers, writers, actors and operators.

Chapayev is the best gift that our cinematography has presented to the Soviet public in these days. The force of this film, which has stirred millions throughout the Soviet Union, is in the remarkable treatment of the theme—the defence of the Socialist fatherland, in the beautiful truthful images of the heroes, in the sincerity of the actors' performance, and in the high cinematographic technique. Particularly touching and attractive is the image of Chapayev played by the excellent actor Babochkin who, on the occasion of the fifteenth anniversary of the Soviet cinema, was awarded the title of "People's Artist of the Republic."

This film has promoted the Vasilyev brothers to the front ranks of Soviet film masters. In recent years, besides the Vasilyevs, prominence has been achieved in Soviet cinematography by artistic individualities like Petrov, Macheret, Ekk, Barnet, Kavalecridze, and Roshal. Socialist realism has proved to be a broad and durable platform for all the new creative currents, and offers the best conditions for further progress of the Soviet cinema.

That *Chapayev* is by no means a solitary achievement of the Soviet cinema is proved by the recent appearance on the Soviet screen of *Peasants*, produced by Ermler, a film reflecting the class struggle in the Soviet villages. By its truthfulness, and depth of treatment of individual personages and of the whole process of agricultural collectivisation, it is fully as excellent as *Chapayev*.

We consider *Chapayev*, *The Youth of Maxim* and *Peasants* as artistic works of vast social scope. They are works executed in the grand Socialist style towards which Soviet art is striving, and which it is already capable of achieving.

HANDICRAFTS

By Prof. A. BAKUSHINSKY, Director, Institute of Handicraft Industry

Handicraft art in the U.S.S.R. reflects the entire wealth of the national cultures of its population. It is so rich in variety, its content, form, technique and the use to which its various products are put are so manifold, and the number of handicraft industries is so large, that we have perforce to deal in this brief article with but a modicum.

What was the character of the handicraft industry before the Revolution? Its characteristically primitive world outlook was reflected most clearly in the toys which it produced. The Russian toy reflected both the closest and most accessible and the farthest and most inaccessible things, the world of reality and the world of fantasy.

Of particular merit is the toy made in our forest regions—the toy made of wood and clay. That toy originated long ago. Its first creators and the long chain of the successors in their work have been surrounded by the sombre landscape of primeval forests, the tranquil waters of wide rivers, the hard toil of the peasants, the squalid huts, crowded with adults and children who shared their abode with domestic cattle and poultry. Into the gloom of the peasant hut the toy brought a bright ray of joy.

Such is the toy of Vyatka—the little white clay figure arrayed in rainbow colours and glittering tinsel. It was born in an epoch imbued with the influences of the culture of the old Russian nobility, reflected by the peasant handicraft artists in their own way, from their own point of view. Such are the spirited “troikas,” or the “cavaliers and ladies” in costumes of the forties and fifties of the last century, invariably accompanied by a little lap dog.

The most powerful and unforgettable of the Vyatka toys are the animals and birds. Here, there is the genuine “brute” style, where the image of the animal becomes a

symbol; not a mere beast but an arch beast.

The artists engaged in the production of the Vyatka toy are given every encouragement in the U.S.S.R. No effort is spared to introduce new images into these handicraft industries.

Next to the Vyatka toy the wooden toy made by the peasants of the Gorky (formerly Nizhni-Novgorod) region, should be noted the wonderful, robust wooden horses made in the ancient township of Gorodetz (on the Volga).

Not far from Gorodetz is the village of Fedoseyevo. There they also make toys—horses and coaches; but in addition there are wooden trams, automobiles and locomotives. Yet the impression is different; canary yellow, the Fedoseyevo toys are daintily adorned with multicoloured leaves and flowers.

The wooden toy of Bogorodsk, which originated long ago in Sergievo, is a newer, more realistic variety of the peasant toy. It is akin to the carved wooden toy of Germany and Switzerland, but its charm and originality as compared with the latter consists in its triumph over naturalism.

Great attention is being accorded to the peasant toy industry. A special Research Institute at Zagorsk (formerly Sergievo) is at work on improving the artistic quality of the toys. The peasant handicraft workshops of toymakers and artist toy specialists are closely associated with the Institute. It has created a number of models extremely interesting both as regards style and the new content which mirrors Soviet life.

In the same district, there has existed since ancient times such industries as wood-carving and painting on wood, which is a result of the introduction to this locality of the northern forms of handicraft art from the banks of the Northern Dvina. In the eighties

and nineties of the last century, in the village of Abramtsevo, there was a revival of the art of wood-carving. This revival was inspired by the artist E. D. Polenova. A special "Polenova" style of wood-carving, with the application of painted ornamentation was created. The products were partly furniture and partly other small household articles. Several handicraft work centres arose around Abramtsevo. They are in existence to-day, and produce their wares both for the home markets and for export.

Most unusual articles are produced by the handicraft centre of the village of Kudrino. The minute, ornate carving in low relief, based essentially on peasant motifs, as well as the smooth surface uncovered by carved designs, is lacquered and polished.

A varied and highly artistic group of handicraft articles is that of peasant decorative ornaments.

The contemporary *khokhlom* articles produced by the peasants of the Gorky region are most of all associated with the traditions of the old peasant art. Originally, the industry catered mainly to the requirements of peasant life. Millions of spoons, cups, plates, platters, salt-cellar, etc., were produced there. The surface of these wooden articles is tin-plated, decorated with primitive painted designs and coated with boiled linseed oil. These articles are dried in ovens at a temperature of 80 to 100 degrees Centigrade. In this way they become waterproof and for a long time retain their brilliant lacquered surface. Subsequently, this purely utilitarian peasant ware was often used as decorative articles by the urban population. Such new designs appeared as inkstands and writing sets, electric table-lamps, trays, suites of furniture for the dining-room and nursery, ash-trays, etc.

The style of the *khokhlom* ornament goes back partly to the old peasant motifs of the Upper and Middle Volga regions and partly to the rich forms of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Baroque.

In such ornaments "grass," "leaves" and "berries" cover the entire field with a solid carpet-like design. In decorating the surface of an article with "grass," the handicraft artist chooses one of three types of background. One type is the metallic "golden" background on which the "grass" is represented in two colours—black and red—with green leaves, yellow, red, green, and black "berries." Or the background is a red vermillion, and there are golden flowers and leaves, and thick

black grass. The richest and most striking effect is obtained, however, against a black background with red grass, golden flowers and leaves, adorned in places—as though with gems—with red, green, yellow and blue dots. There are often vermillion borders around the ornamented surfaces.

Whereas *khokhlom* products are art works which originally served the household needs of the peasants and only subsequently developed into a handicraft industry supplying the market, the "Lukutin" lacquers from the very first were not produced for the peasant consumer. They satisfied the requirements of the middle and partly of the upper classes. The nobility at first preferred imported lacquered articles from England, Germany and France. But soon the high quality of the Lukutin articles attracted the attention of the nobility. The gifted initiator of the Lukutin enterprise was the merchant Lukutin who, in the beginning of the nineteenth century established a factory in the village of Fedoskino, near Moscow, for painted and lacquered articles made of papier-mâché. The first masters were brought over from Germany. But gradually Lukutin trained excellent native specialists who took the place of the foreigners. The subjects of the Lukutin ornaments were varied. They comprised copies of paintings by Western artists—Dutch, English, French, German pastorals, classical motifs, sentimental and humorous scenes from life. Later, copies of pictures by Russian painters appeared and independent compositions by Lukutin masters executed in the same spirit. Great popularity was enjoyed also by subjects of peasant life: "tea drinking," "troikas," "Russian folk dance," "rustic fêtes," and, sometimes, labour in the field.

The present Fedoskino workshop is the successor to the old Lukutin enterprise. Nowadays they produce images of the Socialist village, work and leisure on the collective farm, the Red Army, and portraits of the Soviet leaders. These themes are developed by both the old masters and the young artists who have developed since the Revolution, making use of their own compositions as well as copying from the best works of Soviet artists.

A number of smaller establishments which have now become extinct existed by the side of the Lukutin factory. The "last of the Mohicans" of these small handicraftsmen is the venerable master, A. G. Vishnyakov, who is still active in Zagorsk. As a young man he gave up his craft, but



M. SARKIAN : The Rest Hour.

returned to it shortly after the Revolution. Vishnyakov is hale and hearty despite his advanced age, and he produces decorative still-lives that are remarkable for their depth of feeling. They are simple, vivid, direct, and original as to method. During these years at Zagorsk, Vishnyakov has created his own school of young artists, cultivating a highly interesting kind of ornamentation at the factory of the Zagorsk industrial centre.

Between the decorative realistic style of the Fedoskino workshop and Vishnyakov and the style of the primitive, purely peasant ornament are the products of the Zhestov studio, which specialises in making ornamented trays. Their style of ornamentation is broader, more simplified, more flowery.

Entirely different from these groups as regards style, and partly also as regards technical methods, is the present handicraft art of the former icon painters of the Palekh and Mstera villages in the Ivanovo region.

Before the Revolution the two villages had been the centre of the icon-making industry, widely known throughout Russia but scarcely known abroad. Icon making had long ceased to be an art, having become a trade, although with a very fine and old technique. Its perfection, its refined methods, its "good quality" and peculiar beauty had been preserved by generations of icon painters from ancient times, from the sources of ancient culture. After the Revolution it became necessary to find a new application for the artistic skill and creative energy of the former icon makers.

New paths were found by the most active groups of the former icon painters. About ten years ago, centres were organised both at Palekh and Mstera, which went over from icon making to secular social art. The new content changed the old forms and technique, made it necessary to look for new materials, to create new art objects destined for different purposes. The artisan became an artist.

The movement started by Palekh and Mstera was supported by Soviet organisations and institutions, and by the public at large.

The technique of preparing the semi-manufactured material (papier-mâché) was adapted from the Lukutin tradition, but an altogether different technique of ornamentation was chosen. In the Lukutin lacquer work the method of oil-painting is used. The miniature paintings at Palekh and Mstera are done in tempera upon a black lacquered surface of papier-mâché. The painting is emphasised and set off by gold

and silver on the contours and on the brightest spots of the figures, trees and grass. The exquisite jewel-like golden design completes the impression, fascinating in its richness of fantasy and masterful execution.

The artists of Palekh and Mstera make very free use of subject and of perspective. The theme is developed by blending elements of reality with elements of fancy. By the side of little firs and birch trees we see fantastic and exotic trees and shrubs in gorgeous settings. Amid Central Russian cornfields and dark meadows are scattered coral-like multicoloured mountains. Rivers, lakes and seas shimmer with the silvery blue manes of their curling waves. By the side of the peasant hut and the new motifs which have forced their way into the world of ancient Russian folklore—a collective farm and the latest threshing machine, the tanks and machine-guns of the Red Army—we behold fairy-like decorations of phantom palaces, the cumbersome motley of ancient Russian mansions, the spires of the turrets of the oriental architectural landscape, the arches and pillars of the Renaissance, and the façades and embellishments of antiquity.

Palekh was first to enter upon the new path, and it gained world fame with its lacquer works.

On the whole Palekh is inclined more towards the narrative and the symbolical. It is more graphic and plastic than pictorial; it prefers to forge the form on the dark depths of the lacquered background, profusely embossing the colours with gold paint.

Of an entirely different character is the art of Mstera.

It has its own traditions, its own manner cultivated through the centuries. As at Palekh, icon painting has existed at Mstera since the seventeenth century. The Mstera style was created essentially by the tastes and desires of the various sects of Old Believers. Each group of the Old Believers endeavoured to retain the sacerdotal art as it had existed before the reformation of the Greek Orthodox Church, fighting for its own definite style. Mstera, populated in the main by Old Believers, endeavoured to satisfy all these requirements. Thus was born the Mstera art of stylisation on the model of the antique. While imitating the ancient styles, Mstera maintained its own original character.

Mstera first came out with its decorated papier-mâché articles only two years ago. Mstera work is simpler and more economical of expression than that of Palekh, but

is more picturesque and realistic in its search after new forms and compositions.

The Mstera artists develop their subjects on coloured backgrounds utilising even the black of the lacquer as a colour.

The modern colour scheme of Mstera work by tradition has two opposite poles of colour arrangement. One is the cold colouring with its favourite blue and silvery shadings; in the other, vermillion predominates. In the first there is the evident attempt to depict space and depth. The second is mainly superficial and ornamental.

The modern art of Palekh and Mstera, having arisen after the Revolution, is searching for new paths, endeavouring to depict in its products the throbbing pulse of contemporary life.

Some handicraft art industries of high quality are still being developed in the northern regions of the Soviet Union. Closest of all to the life of the peasants are the artistic articles made of birch bark. This simple, inexpensive material, with tin-foil or even coloured paper for lining, is transformed into a beautiful thing which is most attractive. The agile and nimble fingers of the women, working with an ordinary knife, create these lacy designs quickly, accurately and easily, without any preliminary tracing of the design on the surface.

The North has two handicraft industries whose style, like that of the art of Palekh and Mstera, runs back into the depths of great tradition and complex influences emanating from ancient Russian culture. These are the niello-work of Ustyug, and the bone carving of Kholmogory, which developed during the period of increased intercourse between Moscovite Russia and Europe via the port of Archangel. In these

handicraft industries the traditions of Baroque and Rococo are still alive, intertwined with naïve and primitive images—the products of the peasant world outlook in the past. The craftsmanship of the Ustyug niello-workers was retained by only a few of the old handicraftsmen, and only recently has it begun to revive. Bone carving has a more solid basis. In the Lomonosovo village, near the town of Kholmogory, there exists a centre of handicraftsmen old and young. Flat work predominates here. The Kholmogory handicraftsmen, however, can also make excellent sculptures from bone. For material they use mammoth tusks and walrus tusks, as well as ordinary reindeer bone.

In concluding our brief survey, we must note the huge creative and cultural possibilities opened up before Soviet handicraft art industries since the Revolution. The most valuable and most important factor there is the great emancipation of creative energy, the transformation of the former artisan handicraftsman into an independent master and artist. Whereas in the past, without any great or profound study of tradition, the Russian handicraftsman was handed down from above models of art such as at times were alien and hostile to him from the point of view of style, now, on the contrary, there is to be observed a solicitous attitude towards the content and the genuine forms of mass folk art.

A Scientific Research Institute for the Handicraft Art Industry, well equipped with laboratories and a staff of artists and scholars exists in Moscow. Its purpose is to foster and encourage in every way the handicraft industries upon the basis of their old traditions, at the same time creating a new Soviet content, new forms and even new technical methods.

CARPETS

By Prof. A. BYSTROV.

I.

The exceedingly rich and variegated art of carpet-making in the U.S.S.R. has been cultivated for many generations by the various nationalities inhabiting this vast domain.

The boundless Steppes of Central Asia are the homeland of very primitive carpets that are nevertheless most remarkable for their severe unity of style. These are the carpets made by the descendants of the early hordes which once overran not only Asia but also Europe. Their carpet-weaving was the outcome of the requirements and customs of pastoral tribes and of the primitive agricultural system which had replaced the nomadic life upon the great Semirechye plain, and which remained nearly intact up to the time of the October Revolution.

In the U.S.S.R. most of the nomadic tribes have already taken to settled life; nevertheless, the Central Asiatic carpets and particularly those of Turkmenistan and Kazakstan are still based to a considerable extent upon the requirements of nomadic life.

These carpets constitute the convenient and portable stock of house-furnishing appurtenances for the nomad. Thus, the *Ensi* has been woven since times immemorial as the carpet which serves as an entrance curtain to the tent; the *Chual* and *Mafjach* were the commodious bags which were hung on the sides of the tent and served as wardrobes and chests-of-drawers; the *Polamy* held the framework of the tent together, the pentagonal *Osmodulki* served as ornamental covering for the camel bearing the bride at nuptial ceremonies, and so on.

Carpet-weaving used to be done by the women. The work was usually done by all the women of the family. It was necessary to prepare the material, consisting of sheep's wool, to dye it, and then to weave, slowly, over a period of many months, sometimes years, chanting songs all the time. The songs were sung not merely for the sake of amusement. Their rhythm governed the rhythm of the weaving, changing with each new process, as when tying a knot, or when passing from one design to another.

The stronger and maturer cultures,

primarily the ancient Mongolian-Chinese culture, exercised an enormous influence on the art of the peoples of Central Asia. These influences were adjusted to other, more primitive, customs and tastes. The style of Central Asiatic carpets is based on the same feeling of restrained, simple and somewhat severe rhythm which is characteristic of the instrumental music and songs of the nomads. The nature of such rhythm is not decorative but ornamental. It strikes one with its small decorative surfaces, but gradually the restrained play of minute forms in constant succession, repeating themselves in endless motion, reveals itself. Geometrical forms predominate in the designs of the Central Asiatic carpets conditioned by the need for primitive, rhythmic, but not yet pictorial treatment.

Later on the circle of motifs of the Central Asiatic carpets also included pictorial forms, although they were generalised and geometric to the utmost. Thus, for instance, the famous *ghul* motif of the rose, the tent, the bird, the grapevine, etc., appeared. The Central Asiatic carpets, covered with geometric ornaments, are characterised by great restraint in the tonal range of colours. The deep and warm dark-red "wine colour," prevails here. It absorbs and retains within itself smaller pieces of white, dark-blue, and sometimes dark-green colour, which compose the design and the movement of the pattern. Often the dark blue colour is increased in the design. This imparts an exceptionally beautiful colour effect. The carpet shimmers with the play of colours from warm red to cold lilac-blue.

The character of the Central Asiatic carpet varies in different regions and among different tribes.

II.

A second home of Soviet carpet production is the Caucasus. It has an even greater variety of nationalities and the occupations they have initiated cattle-raising, agriculture and mixed agriculture and cattle-raising.

The style of the Caucasian carpets is entirely different from that of the Central Asiatic carpets. The basic artistic attribute of the Caucasian carpets is decoration,

which subordinates the ornamental features. The impression is built upon the effect of gorgeous and varied colours, strongly contrasted. The colour contrasts of the middle and the borders are greatly emphasised. Against the background of the central field of the carpet there are frequently large decorative, independent forms. Blue and red are also frequently found in the colour scheme of the background. Side by side with them are flashes of gold and sunshine yellow. The green is considerably brighter here than in the Central Asiatic carpets. The geometrical motifs in the Caucasian carpets are replaced by floral and animal subjects. The Caucasian carpet, not only in its colouring but also in its motifs, resembles a beautiful garden of flowers.

The glorious, abundant, sensuous nature of this country is recreated in the form of this folk art.

The carpets of Azerbaijan occupy a place by themselves among the Caucasian carpets. The geometrical style is more strongly retained in them, the colour combinations are more accentuated, and the composition is more consistent and symmetrical. The carpets of Armenia and of Georgia are softer in colouring. The colour harmonies in them are appreciably more restrained. The design is more flexible, the pictorial-floral forms are more abundant.

Carpet-making in the Caucasus, and especially in Trans-Caucasia, has a deep and ancient tradition. It had been greatly imbued with the forms and influences of the Near East, from the ancient culture of Assyria and Babylon to the cultures of Persia and Turkey.

III.

Ukrainian carpets occupy a special place, have their own motifs, and their own colour schemes. An important part in their evolution was played both by the influences which came from the Caucasus and by the wave of artistic motifs, forms and tastes, which flowed in from the west through Poland and Galicia. The Ukraine, too, loves the colour and ornamental decorative contrasts of the middle field and borders. Against the bright, now blue, now red, now yellow, often black, background of their carpets, the Ukrainian women carpet-weavers scatter

in restrained and delicate fashion the ornamental motifs of flowers and leaves. These motifs are akin to the Ukrainian ornaments on walls and ovens, the embroideries on fabrics, and the designs on glazed ware. Basically the style of the Ukrainian carpet is a product of pure folk art.

A different position is held by the Kursk and Ural carpets. Their origin and style are largely associated with the culture of the landed nobility and serfdom. In their motifs there is much taken from the Baroque, Rococo and Empire periods. All this, transformed by the original tastes of the Kursk and Ural peasant women carpet-weavers, creates interesting and fresh varieties of artistic form.

IV.

Before the Revolution the condition of the carpet handicraft industries in Russia was a precarious one. Carpet-making was essentially women's work. Their creative initiative was stultified. Unorganised, plying their trade in individual fashion, they easily became the prey of middlemen. The style of the carpets in all parts of the former Russian Empire was rapidly degenerating under the influence of the market requirements of that time, which were essentially philistine and banal. The technique was declining. Instead of the vegetable dyes that were beautiful in colour and lasting, there came a flood of aniline dyes.

After the Revolution, the story of carpet production changed drastically. At the present time the scores of thousands of women carpet-weavers in all parts of the U.S.S.R. are united into co-operative handicrafts groups and associations.

The old vegetable dyes are being restored, and their production re-commenced by State factories. The Soviet public and scientific institutions are sympathetically fostering the revival of the highest form of the carpet-making art after the best old models, as well as the development of the creative initiative of the women carpet-weavers, transforming them from artisans into artists.

Carpet making in the U.S.S.R. flourishes not only as a valuable branch of export trade, but also as a substantial factor organically contributing to the creation of the new Soviet culture, and to its new character.

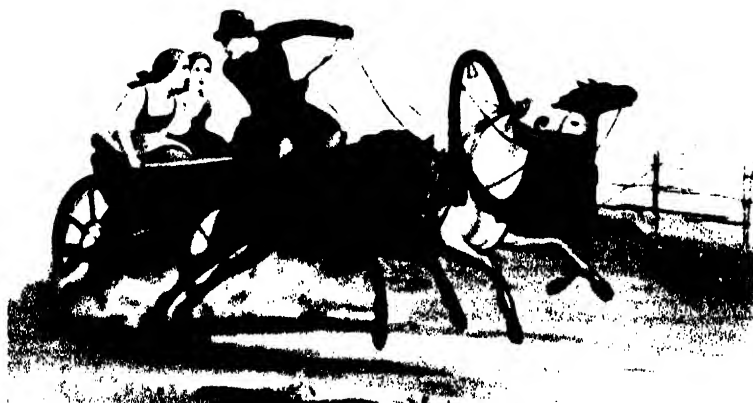
CRAFTS



Palekh ornament on papier-mache plate. The bear hunt. Executed
by BUTORIN.



1. A tea-party. Lukutin painting on papier-mache, early 19th century.
2. A troika ride in summer. Lukutin papier-mache painting, mid 19th century.
3. Flowers. Painting on papier-mache, by A. KRUGLIKOV, of the Fedoskin workshop. 1934.

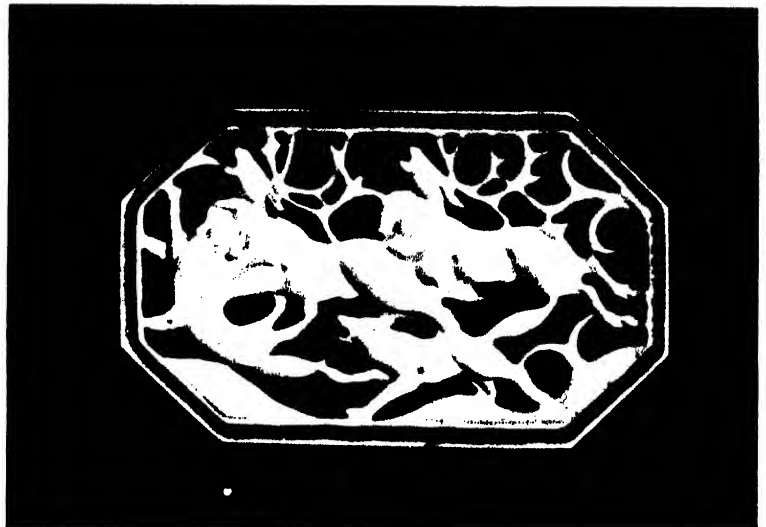


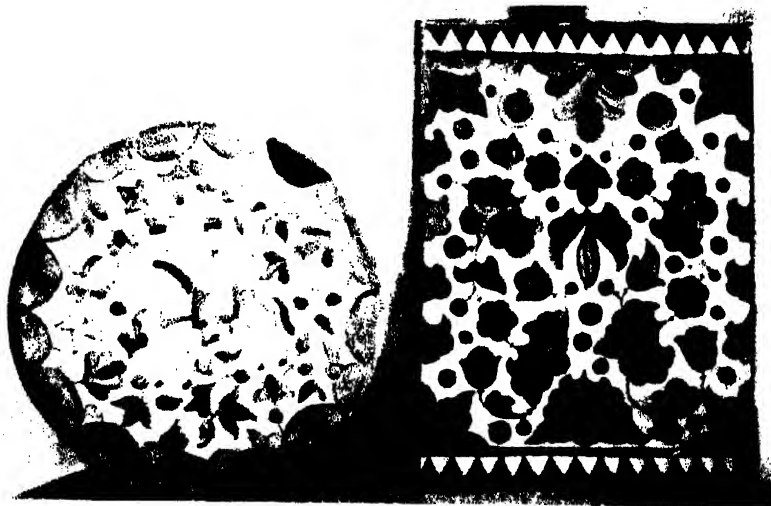


4. A brooch. Kholmogory carving in bone. 1934.

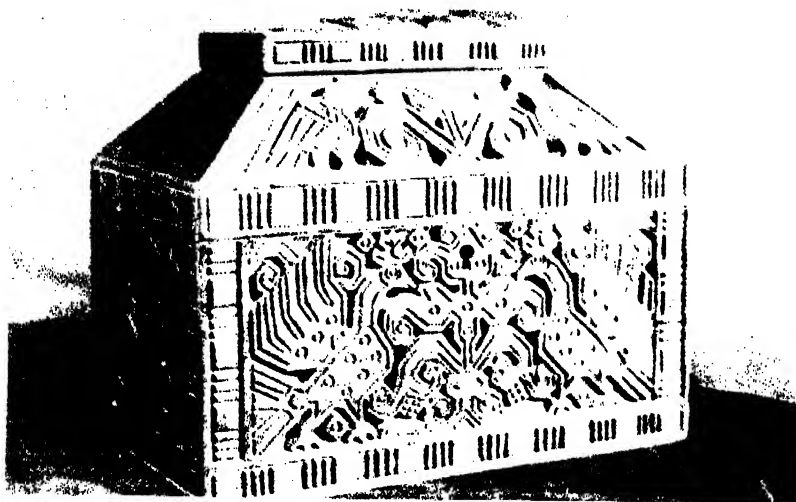
5. A young walrus, carved in bone, from the Kholmogory workshop, now in the Institute of Handicrafts Industry.

6. An example from the same Institute of papier-mache inlaid with carved bone, executed for the Kholmogory workshop by M. RAKOV, 1933.

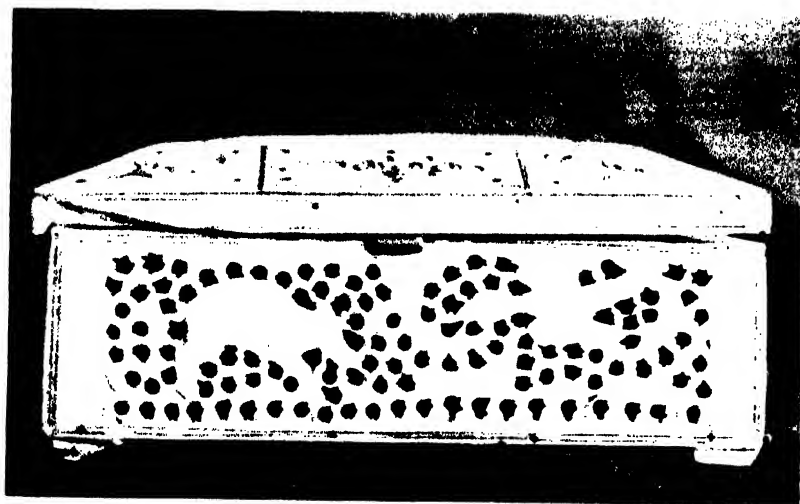




Zagorsk ornament on wood, based on motifs of the northern region.



Kudrino wood-carving. A trunk.



Kholmogory bone-inlaid trunk of the 18th century.

TRADITION IN CRAFTSMANSHIP

The traditional crafts are not discouraged in Russia, on the contrary special organisations exist to maintain and develop them.

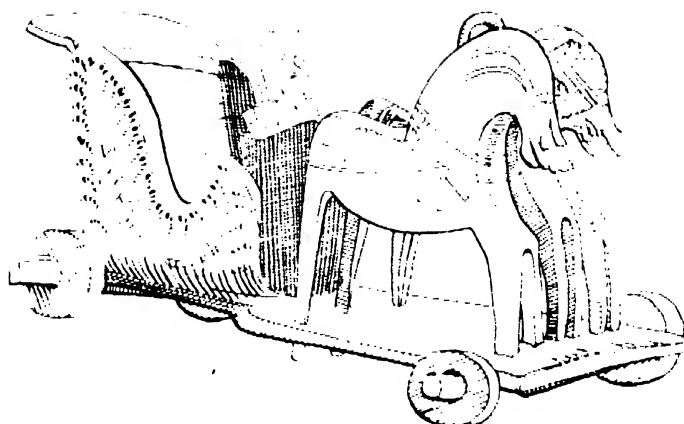


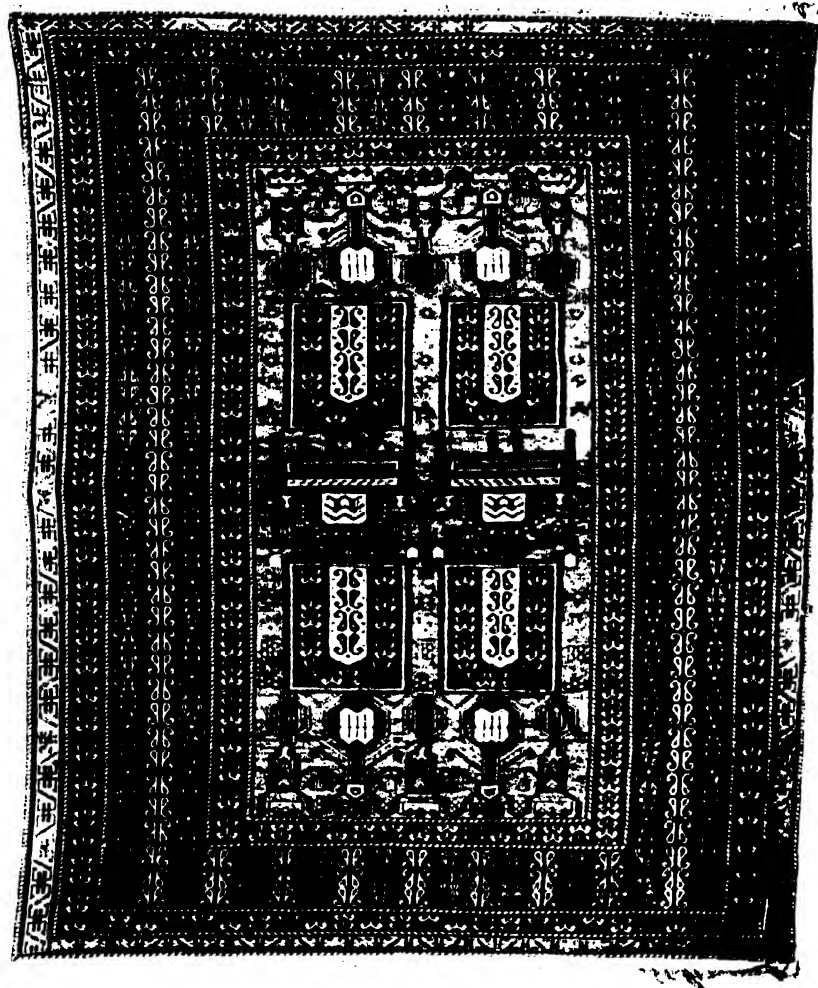
Bogorodsk coloured wooden toy.
First half of 19th century. "The
Nutcracker."



(Above): Palekh ornament on
papier-mache. Prince Gvidon
from "Story of Tsar Saltan"
by Pushkin. Work by P.
KOZHUKHIN, 1932.

(Right): Gorodetz coloured toy:
The troika, with three horses.

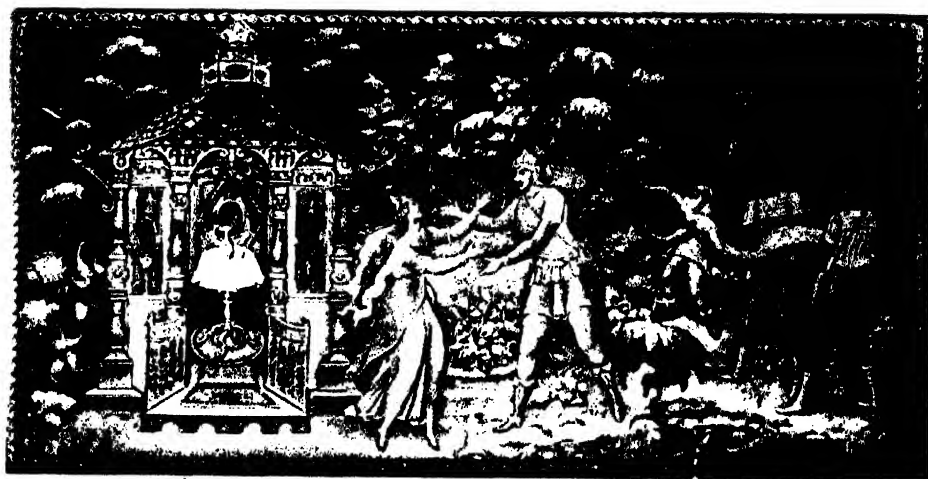


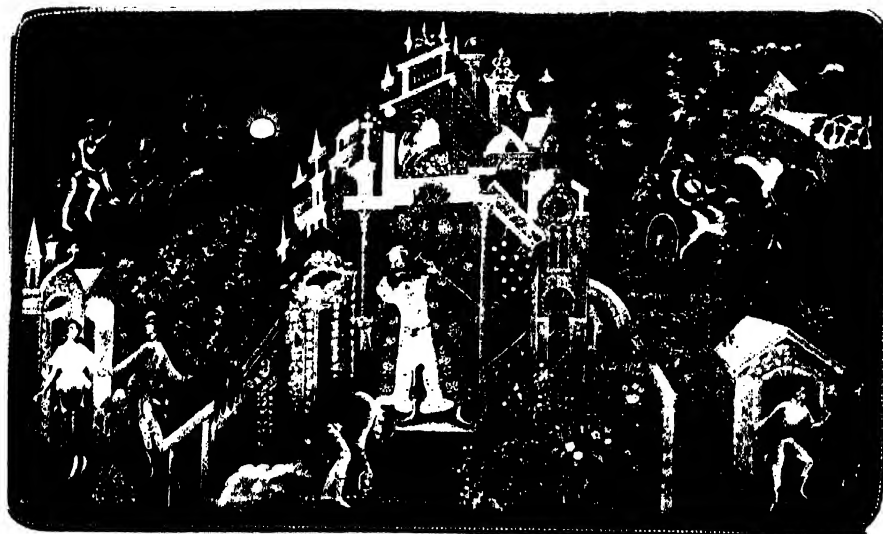


ARMENIAN ERIVAN CARPET.

A revival in carpet manufacture has been accompanied by the use of fast dyes and general improvement of quality.

Palekh ornament on papier-mache. A money-box. Work by PARILOV. A scene from Pushkin's poem "Ruslan and Ludmila," 1933.

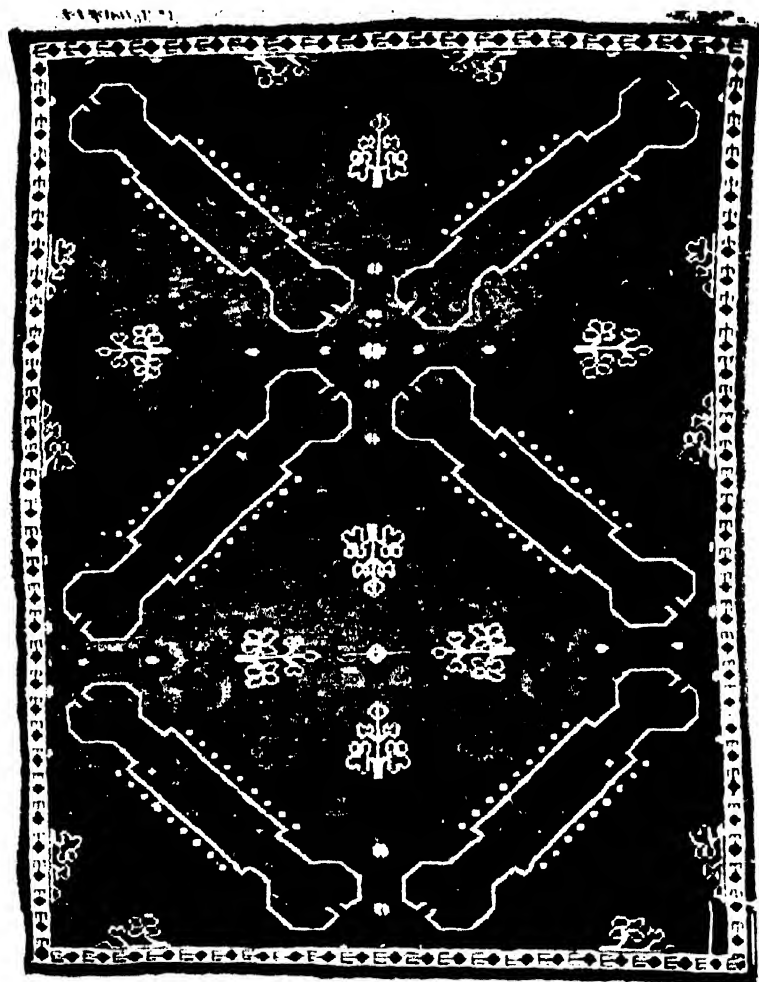




Palekh ornament on papier-mache.
 "There were merry days," by
 P. BAZHENOV, 1933.

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